

James Cole
School of Applied Sciences
Past Human and Environment Dynamics Research Excellence Group
Email: J.N.Cole@brighton.ac.uk



Research interests

My research interests focus around understanding the fundamental question of what it means to be human. I am interested in knowing whether certain abilities that we all take for granted such as language, symbolism, and abstract thought are unique to our species (*Homo sapiens*) or were present in other ancient human species such as *Homo heidelbergensis* or the Neanderthals. In order to ascertain this I look at a range of evidence strands but I primarily focus on the stone tools left behind by our ancestors for clues to their mental capabilities. I am also interested in what cognitive, behavioural and social thresholds are needed by hominins in order to allow them to successfully disperse across the globe and overcome any environmental constraints. Finally, I am fascinated by how ancient hominins treated their dead, particularly how and why some of them seem to have practiced cannibalism. By understanding the treatment of the dead, we can gain greater insights to the lifeways and social structures of the living.

In order to try and understand our hominin ancestors I am involved with a number of archaeological projects here in the UK and in East Africa. My main research project is the Isimila Stone Age Project where I am the Director of a multi-institutional and international research collaboration between academic institutions in the UK and Tanzania.

Qualifications

PhD, Hominin cognitive and behavioural complexity in the Pleistocene: Assessment through identity, intentionality and visual display, University of Southampton
Award Date: 16 Dec 2011

Master, Human Origins, University of Southampton
Award Date: 1 Jul 2008

Bachelor, BA Archaeology, University of Southampton
Award Date: 1 Jul 2004

Fellow D2, Higher Education Academy, UK

Employment

Associate Dean Education and Student Exp

School of Applied Sciences
University of Brighton
1 Jul 2024 → present

Past Human and Environment Dynamics Research Excellence Group

25 Sept 2017 → present

Fellow

1 Sept 2020 → present

Fellow

Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Kingdom
9 Nov 2018 → present

Research outputs

Chesowanja (Baringo Basin), Kenya

Gowlett, J., Cole, J. & Rucina, S., 18 Aug 2023, *Handbook of Pleistocene Archaeology of Africa: Hominin behavior, geography, and chronology*. Beyin, A., Wright, D. K., Wilkins, J. & Olszewski, D. I. (eds.). Springer, p. 537-548 11 p.

Kilombe Volcano, Kenya

Gowlett, J., Cole, J., Heries, A., Hoare, S., Stanistreet, I. & Rucina, S., 18 Aug 2023, *Handbook of Pleistocene Archaeology of Africa: Hominin behavior, geography, and chronology*. Beyin, A., Wright, D. K., Wilkins, J. & Olszewski, D. I. (eds.). Springer, p. 577-593 17 p.

Landscapes of Human Evolution: Contributions in honour of John Gowlett

Cole, J. (Editor), McNabb, J. (Editor), Grove, M. (Editor) & Hosfield, R. (Editor), 13 Feb 2020, 203 p. Archaeopress.

Aspects of human physical and behavioural evolution during the last 1 million years

Galway-Witham, J., Cole, J. & Stringer, C., 14 Aug 2019, In: *Journal of Quaternary Science*. 34, 6, p. 355-378 24 p.

Knapping in the Dark: Stone Tools and a Theory of Mind

Cole, J., 30 May 2019, *Squeezing Minds from Stones: Cognitive Archaeology and the Evolution of the Human Mind*. Overman, K. A. & Coolidge, F. L. (eds.). New York: Oxford University Press

Earliest Europeans: Integrating perspectives from archaeology, palaeoanthropology and palaeoclimatology

Hosfield, R. & Cole, J., 25 Feb 2019, In: *Quaternary Science Reviews*. 208, p. 140-142 3 p.

The Application of Elliptic Fourier Analysis in Understanding Biface Shape and Symmetry Through the British Acheulean

Hoggard, C., McNabb, J. & Cole, J., 21 Feb 2019, In: *Journal of Paleolithic Archaeology*. 2, 2, p. 115-133

Earliest Europeans: Integrating Perspectives from Archaeology, Paleoanthropology and Paleoclimatology

Hosfield, R. (Editor) & Cole, J. (Editor), 2019, Elsevier.

Early hominins in north-west Europe: a punctuated long chronology?

Hosfield, R. & Cole, J., 9 May 2018, In: *Quaternary Science Reviews*. 190, p. 148-160 13 p.

Koutroulou Magoula in Phthiotida, Central Greece: A Middle Neolithic Tell Site in Context

Hamilakis, Y., Kyparissi-Apostolika, N., Loughlin, T., Carter, T., Cole, J., Facorellis, Y., Katsarou, S., Kaznesi, A., Pentedeka, A., Tsamis, V. & Zorzin, N., 1 Jan 2018, *Communities, Landscapes, and Interaction in Neolithic Greece*. Sarris, A., Kalogiropoulou, E., Kalayci, T. & Karimali, L. (eds.). Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA: International Monographs in Prehistory, p. 81-96 16 p. (Archaeological Series).

From side to side: Symmetry in handaxes in the British Lower and Middle Palaeolithic

McNabb, J., Cole, J. & Hoggard, C., 21 Nov 2017, In: *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*. 17, p. 293-310 18 p.

Less of a bird's song than a hard rock ensemble

Hosfield, R., Cole, J. & McNabb, J., 1 Nov 2017, In: *Evolutionary Anthropology*.

Assessing the calorific significance of episodes of human cannibalism in the Palaeolithic

Cole, J., 6 Apr 2017, In: *Scientific Reports*. 7, p. 1-10 44707.

The Acheulian Site at Rodafnidia, Lisvori, on Lesbos, Greece: 2010–2012

Galanidou, N., Athanassas, C., Cole, J., Iliopoulos, G., Katerinopoulos, A., Magganas, A. & McNabb, J., 20 Jan 2017, *Paleoanthropology of the Balkans and Anatolia: Human Evolution and its Context*. Harvati, K. & Roksandic, M. (eds.). Dordrecht: Springer, p. 119-138 20 p. (Vertebrate Paleobiology and Paleoanthropology Series).

Assessing Hominin Cognition: Language and Social Signaling in the Lower to Middle Palaeolithic

Cole, J., 17 Dec 2016, *Cognitive Models in Palaeolithic Archeology*. New York.: Oxford University Press, p. 157-195 39 p.

Rethinking Human Responses to Sea-level Rise: The Mesolithic Occupation of the Channel Islands

Conneller, C., Bates, M., Bates, R., Schadla-Hall, T., Blinkhorn, E., Cole, J., Pope, M., Scott, B., Shaw, A. & Underhill, D., 3 Mar 2016, In: *Proceedings of The Prehistoric Society*. 82, p. 27-71 45 p.

Examining the Presence of Symmetry within Acheulean Handaxes: A Case Study in the British Palaeolithic
Cole, J., 15 Oct 2015, In: Cambridge Archaeological Journal. 25, 4, p. 713-732 20 p.

The mirror cracked: Symmetry and refinement in the Acheulean handaxe
McNabb, J. & Cole, J., 10 Jun 2015, In: Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports. 3, p. 100-111 12 p.

Handaxe symmetry in the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic: implications for the Acheulean gaze
Cole, J., 1 Mar 2015, *Settlement, Society and Cognition in Human Evolution: Landscapes in Mind*. Coward, F., Hosfield, R., Pope, M. & Wenban-Smith, F. F. (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 234-257 24 p.

Hominin language development: a new method of archaeological assessment
Cole, J., 7 Mar 2014, In: Biosemiotics. 8, 1, p. 67-90 24 p.

The Identity Model: a theory to access visual display and hominin cognition within the Palaeolithic
Cole, J., 6 Feb 2014, *Lucy to Language: Benchmark Papers*. Dunbar, R. I. M., Gamble, C. & Gowlett, J. A. J. (eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 90-107 18 p.

East meets West: The Middle Pleistocene site of Rodafnidia on Lesbos, Greece
Galanidou, N., Cole, J., Iliopoulos, G. & McNabb, J., 3 Jun 2013, In: Antiquity. 87, 336

Papers from the British Academy Lucy to Language: the Archaeology of the Social Brain Seminar Series on Visual Display in the Palaeolithic
Cole, J. (Editor) & Ruebens, K. (Editor), 1 Jan 2012, In: Human Origins. 1, p. 0-0 1 p.

Quaternary Environments and Archaeology of Jersey: A New Multidisciplinary project looking at the early prehistoric occupation of the English Channel Region
Pope, M., Bates, M., Cole, J., Conneller, C., Ruebens, K., Scott, B., Shaw, A., Smith, G., Underhill, D. & Wragg-Sykes, R., 1 Jan 2012, *Unravelling the Palaeolithic Ten years of research at the Centre for the Archaeology of Human Origins (CAHO, University of Southampton)*. Oxford: University of Southampton Series in Archaeology 8: BAR S2400. Archaeopress, p. 27-38 12 p.

Recent work at the Lower Palaeolithic site of Corfe Mullen, Dorset, England
McNabb, J., Hosfield, R., Dearling, K., Barker, D., Strutt, K., Cole, J., Bates, M. & Toms, P., 1 Jan 2012, In: Proceedings of The Prehistoric Society. 78, p. 35-50 16 p.

The Identity Model: a theory to access visual display and hominin cognition within the Palaeolithic
Cole, J., 1 Jan 2012, In: Human Origins. 1, p. 24-40 17 p.

Consuming Passions: Reviewing the Evidence for Cannibalism within the Prehistoric Archaeological Record
Cole, J., Jun 2006, In: Assemblage. 9

Awards

FIXED DEADLINE: Kilombe Volcano PProject
Cole, J. (PI)
1/07/23 → 31/07/23

Projects

Coping with climate: the legacy of homo heidelbergensis
Cole, J. (CoI) & Hosfield, R. (CoPI)
Arts and Humanities Research Council
1/04/16 → 30/09/17

The Isimila stone age project

Cole, J. (PI), McNabb, J. (Col), Bates, M. (Col), Bushozi, P. (Col), Kwekason, A. (Col), Toms, P. (Col), Duller, G. (Col) & Nash, D. (Col)

1/03/14 → 31/05/17