

EVOS

EVOLUTIONARY STUDIES PROGRAM
AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY



Miocene apes, early hominins and the coevolution of bipedalism and precision grasping

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Miocene hominoids are crucial for understanding the evolution of apes and humans. Extant apes represent a decimated and geographically restricted group of primates, but the Miocene has been repeatedly depicted as ‘the planet of the apes’ by many. What we can see now is just a relic of the large diversity of forms that existed in the past... extant great apes seem to be very derived (evolutionarily distinct) from the ancestral ape condition, which should limit the ability to make evolutionary inferences about the earliest hominins (human ancestors) on the basis of just extant taxa... we must look at the early Miocene apes, which are more widely distributed and well represented in the fossil record, in order to infer what the last common ancestor of apes and humans might have looked like... This includes finding clues about why and how bipedalism evolved in humans and its relation to precision grasping and tool use.

Fall 2011 EvoS Seminar Series
Monday 10/3 at 5:00 PM in AA-G008
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