The association of human evidence with fluvial environments in Britain during the Lower Palaeolithic (Ashton et al. 2006) is more a reflection of the availability of lithic raw material and subsequent discard of artefacts in these locations rather than a reflection of human landscape use.


Time-averaged stone tool assemblages from river terraces can effectively be used to document relative human population change (Ashton & Lewis 2002; Ashton and Hosfield 2010) and do not simply mirror past biases in collection (McNabb 2007).


The claimed absence of humans in Britain during MIS 5e (Ashton 2002) reflects the scarcity of suitable ‘capture points’ for artefacts and the short duration of this period (as suggested for northern Europe by Roebroeks and Speleers 2002) rather than a genuine human absence.


Morphological distinctions in handaxes can be used to model the dispersal history of hominid groups across continents (Lycett 2009) rather than the variation predominantly reflecting factors such as resharpening (McPherron 1999) and variations in raw material (Ashton and White 2003).
7. The view that early human fossils such as ‘Lucy’ are too rare and fragile for public display and should only be available for scientific study (as defended for example by Richard Leakey and Rick Potts) undermines the role of museums as the public access point to original objects.

8. The ‘Desert Louvre’ in Abu Dhabi can be viewed as ‘France selling out its heritage’ (Daniel Alcouffe, Honorary Curator at the Louvre), rather than an important way of bridging what the ‘world considers a clash of civilizations’ (Jacques Chirac) between Islam and the West (Washington Post March 11th, 2007).

9. Books such as ‘The God Delusion’ by Richard Dawkins have provided a false dichotomy for Christians who believe in evolution, by providing them with a choice of atheism or supporters of ‘intelligent design’.