

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES & LINGUISTICS FREE PUBLIC SPEAKER SERIES



How the Human Brain Got Language? Insight from Stone Tool-Making Dr. Jean-Baptiste Leca The origin of language is one of the most puzzling mysteries in human evolution. Various hypotheses have been proposed, but none has provided compelling evidence to attain wide acceptance.

As Homo erectus was learning to make increasingly sophisticated stone tools (e.g., Acheulean hand axe), evolutionary changes in its brain could have paved the way for the evolution of language.

Mon, February 24, 2020 2:00-3:00 PM AH116

Questions?

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In this talk, I will argue that complex stone tool-making offers a glimpse into the workings of our ancestral minds and may shed light on the emergence of language in the human lineage. Indeed, systematically chipping away at a rock and building a coherent sentence are both goaldirected hierarchically organized sequential behaviours that require us to think several steps ahead. I will present behavioural, psychological, and neuro-anatomical/physiological evidence supporting the hypothesis that complex stone tool-making and language may have co-evolved in early hominins.

> University of Lethbridge