I Forgot to Remember to Forget

1st Peoples in the New World

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Figure 1

In 1955 Elvis Presley recorded *I Forgot to Remember to Forget* and in February of 1956 it became his first number one record. How many baby boomers remember this? In 1957, Marie Wormington wrote in her famous *Ancient Man in North America* that non-fluted points (Figure 1) were found with extinct Pleistocene mammoths in Mexico (p.97). How many readers remember this?

Archaeologists, like individuals of other disciplines, have a tendency to forget facts that don't fit their understanding of the world. Now they don't really forget them, they just fail to remember them in their writings and presentations. I believe they do this to present a clean and concise explanation. On the other hand, if they presented all of the contradictory information associated with their explanation, it would appear as conjecture instead of a solid theory. The peopling of the New World has also suffered from this forgetfulness and so this paper has the purpose of remembering some of the forgotten facts.

The Contradiction

Most of the readers have heard of the fluted Clovis point and the Clovis culture. And, most of the same readers know that there has been a continuing debate for many years about whether the Clovis people were the first in the New World or if there were people (Pre-Clovis) here before Clovis. The Clovis-First advocates argue that Clovis points are the earliest in the New World. On the other hand, the Pre-Clovis advocates can't forget the glaring fact that Clovis points are not found in Asia or anywhere else in the Old World. Additionally, they are not found in Alaska. The Clovis point is a New World invention and that invention occurred somewhere south of Alaska by people who were already in the New World.

Some Pre-Clovis advocates have tried to reconcile the lack of Pre-Clovis points by arguing that the Pre-Clovis people had a bone technology. Bone is degradable and this fact reduces the chances of finding the bone points. Others have even argued for a pre-projectile point technology with no points at all. This technology would then be non-diagnostic and would require C14 dates to justify each find. However, neither of these proposals are very satisfying because there are stone points in Asia and the rest of the World prior to the invention of the Clovis point. So, it is only logical that these Pre-Clovis people would have brought a lithic technology that included points with them when they entered the New World.

Early New World Pleistocene Hunters with Critters

Blackwater Draw, New Mexico is the site where fluted Clovis points were first found with extinct Pleistocene mammoths. So, how many of the readers know of the site named Santa Isabel Iztapan near Mexico City? This site, which is actually two mammoths that are located about ½ mile apart, also yielded points in association with mammoth. But, the points were not fluted. One point was found with the first mammoth in 1952 and two more with the second mammoth in 1954. The point in Figure 1 is a proximal fragment of one of the points from the second mammoth. And no, it is not upside down, nor is it a distal fragment. It is a bi-pointed projectile with basal edge grinding (Wormington 1957:95).

In the United States a popular myth has developed that *only* fluted points (Clovis) have been found with Pleistocene proboscides in the New World. This is not the case, as demonstrated by the Santa Isabel Iztapan mammoths. And there are more. Table 1 is a list of fluted and non-fluted point sites that have associations with Pleistocene critters. Some readers may ask why I didn't include more fluted sites in Table 1. My answer is the sites listed there are the only ones that I am convinced have undeniable association between points and critters. The Discovery Year in the Table is the discovery of the association and not the site. Also, I have purposefully omitted any C14 dates because not all of the sites have dates and the ones that do were measured at different times in the development of the C14 dating process. As a result critics of dates, which don't align with the critics' paradigm, are quick to point out that the dates are absent or old and unreliable.

Table 1 -- Sites with Association of Extinct Pleistocene Fauna and Points

Discovery Year	**Fluted Points** (Clovis)	**Non-Fluted Points** (El Jobo & Bi-Pointed)
1936	Blackwater Draw (USA) Mammoth (a)	
1937	Miami (USA) Mammoth (b)	
1952	Naco (USA) Mammoth (c)	Santa Isabel Iztapan (Mexico) Mammoth 1 (d)
1954		Santa Isabel Iztapan (Mexico) Mammoth 2 (e)
1955	Lehner (USA) Mammoth (f)	
1957	**Ancient Man in North America 4th Edition** by Marie Wormington	
1962	Domebo (USA) Mammoth (g)	
1964		Hueyatlaco (Mexico) Horse (h)
1966	Escapule (USA) Mammoth (i)	
1968	Murray Springs (USA) Mammoth (j)	
1969		Cucuruchu (Venezuela) Mastodon (k)
1969		Taima-Taima (Venezuela) Mastodon (l)
1973	Colby (USA) Mammoth (m)	
1979	Kimmswick (USA) Mastodon (n)	
1983		Monte Verde (Chile) Mastodon (o)
1990		El Vano (Venezuela) Megathere (p)

(a) Hester 1972; (b) Sellards 1938; (c) Haury 1953; (d)-(e) Wormington 1957; (f) Haury et al. 1959; (g) Leonhardy 1966; (h) Irwin-Williams 1967; (i) Hemmings, and Haynes 1969; (j) Haynes and Huckell 2007; (k-l) Cruxent 1970; (m) (Frison and Todd 1986; (n) Graham et al. 1981; (o) Dillehay 1989; (p) Quero 1998

I have added the 1957 line in Table 1 because this is the year that Marie Wormington published her 4th and last edition of *Ancient Man in North America*. In that edition she writes about all six sites in Table 1 that predate 1957. In regard to the first mammoth from Santa Isabel Iztapan, E. H. Sellards, Alex D. Krieger and Wormington visited the site in 1952, and saw and testified that the artifacts were in situ with the mammoth (93). So, Wormington did not start or perpetrate this "only-Clovis-with-mammoth" myth. In fact, she wrote in her 1957 book: "It is not impossible that they [doubly pointed laurel-leaf forms] could have been one of the types, brought from Asia by early migrants, that one would expect to find along a migration route." (99). Bracketed words are mine.

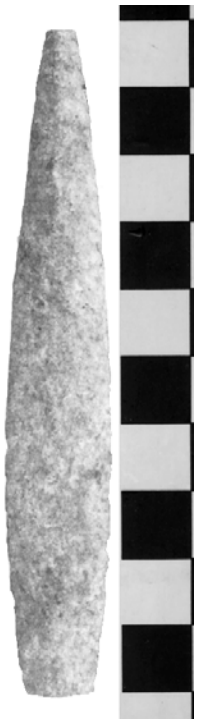

Figure 2

Since 1957, there have been six additional associations found between extinct Pleistocene critters and fluted points. This is to be compared with five for the non-fluted category. And, I must admit that all of the non-fluted finds have been met with controversy and a sense that the archaeological community was trying to forget them. The non-fluted points in Table 1 from the South American sites are now classified as El Jobo, although the authors of the Monte Verde Report say this with some apprehension (Dillehay 1989). Figure 2 is a point from Monte Verde.

The so-called Sandia Type I point is non-fluted and bi-pointed. In A*ncient Man in the North America*, Wormington gave it the starring role in this early, non-fluted tradition. Wormington continued to remind the reader about the association of Sandia points being part of this non-fluted tradition up until sometime after 1965 (Wormington and Forbes 1965). This inclusion of the Sandia point is possibly one of the reasons many archaeologists have tried to forget the entire tradition. (See my Sandia Cave webpage, http://ele.net/sandia_cave/elephant.htm.) This is equivalent to "throwing the baby out with the bathwater." Wormington did not do this. Instead, after 1970 she forgets about the Sandia point but not this early unfluted tradition (Irwin and Wormington 1970).

Figure 3

The reader may notice that the two unfluted points in Figure 1 and 2 appear very different from each other. However, is that difference any greater than the difference in the fluted Clovis points in Figure 3? These are plastic casts. The lower left is a point from the Colby Mammoth site. The other two are from Blackwater Draw.

In summary to this section, both fluted and non-fluted points were being made and used in the New World to hunt the now extinct Pleistocene critters. Marie Wormington never forgot this. In her 1983 article *Early Man in the New World: 1970-1980*, she reminds the reader of the Mexico Mammoths and the El Jobo Complex (193).

Early New World Pleistocene Hunters without Critters

While researching this non-fluted point association with Pleistocene mammals in the Fall of 2008, I discovered a book titled *The Ancient Californians: Rancholabrean Hunters of the Mojave Lakes Country* edited by Emma Lou Davis (1978). This book described the archaeological survey work performed in the 1970s at the Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, located in the Mojave Desert. To my surprise, here was a book saying Clovis evolved from non-fluted points. To my embarrassment, here was a book published 30 years ago that was saying what I only recently, independently deduced. (See http://ele.net/art_folsom/pre-clovis_2004/preclovis2004.htm.) To my amazement, here was a book that archaeology forgot.

So why did archaeology forget this book? It wasn't because the author lacked credentials as she had received her Ph.D. in anthropology from UCLA almost 15 years before the book was published. It wasn't because the book was one of many on a belabored topic. Instead, its ideas and concepts were fresh and new. It wasn't because the book wasn't peer reviewed. Six scholars reviewed it including Marie Wormington. Some would say the conclusions it reached were unfounded because the artifacts were surfaced collected from deflated surfaces and therefore there was no chronological control. However, Davis had chronological control in the various degrees of weathering of the surfaces of the artifacts. I understand many will argue that surface weathering is too variable to be an indicator of age, however I disagree and support it. (See http://ele.net/recycling/diffsurf.htm.)

I believe the archaeology community forgot *The Ancient Californians* because of the conclusions it reached and not the methodology. If the conclusion had not walked heavily on the Clovis-First model, I suspect this book would have become an excellent methodology book on how to deal with surface collections and collecting. Instead, it sits on library shelves collecting dust as it has only been cited a couple of times since it was published.

Discussion and Questions

In late 2000, I wrote *The Clovis/Folsom Transition* (http://ele.net/Carl/intro.htm), which put forth the idea of two types of Clovis points. I called them Old Clovis and New Clovis and defined them by different manufacturing techniques. Old Clovis was fluted near the end of its manufacture. New Clovis was fluted a number of times during its manufacture as a thinning method. At that time I wrote that Old Clovis' cross-section was "lenticular" and the point's faces were "convex to each other." New Clovis had a "rectangular or plate-like" cross-section and the faces were "parallel" to each other.

By 2004, after doing survey work on the North Slope for five summers, I developed the idea of thick and thin-bodied points. The Paleoindian points we found on the Slope are thick-bodied and unfluted and called Mesa/Sluiceway. (See http://ele.net/arctic_artifacts/ThumbNails.htm.) To my eyes they are identical to Agate Basin points, which are found in Canada and the US. Occasionally, we would find a Mesa/Sluiceway point that had been refurbished after the base had been broken

off. This re-basing amounted to basal thinning, but it looked like fluting. Additionally, these re-based Mesa/Sluiceway points reminded me of my Old Clovis definition of 2000. So, after returning from the Slope that summer I wrote *Clovis First / Pre-Clovis Problem Revisited 2004* (http://ele.net/art_folsom/pre-clovis_2004/preclovis2004.htm). In this webpage I pointed out that at the Hell Gap Site, Agate Basin was found above and below Folsom levels (Sellet 1999:118-119). I proposed a thick-bodied point, similar to Agate Basin, was ancestral to the Clovis point. Now I had an evolution. A thick-bodied point (Agate Basin) evolved into a thick-bodied, fluted point (Old Clovis), which in turned evolved into a thin-bodied fluted point (New Clovis). The genesis of the fluting was the re-basing (fluting) of the thick-bodied point. In this 2004 paper I defined a thick-bodied point as one that had a width-to-thickness ratio of 3.0 or less. Thin-bodied points had a width-to-thickness ratio of 4.0 or greater. Between 3.0 and 4.0 was undefined.

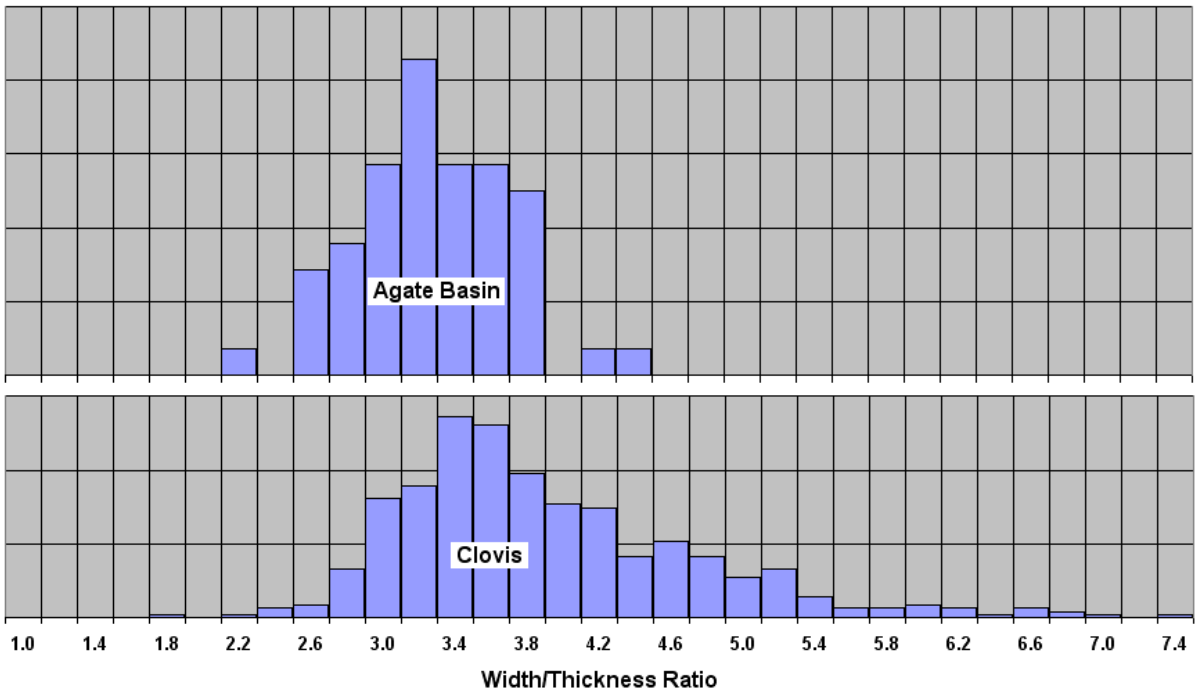

Figure 4

During the winter of 2008-09 I gathered Clovis point metrics from all sorts of sources. I found them in the literature and I begged them from my colleagues. I even purchased some plastic casts and measured them. The end result of this effort can be seen in the lower frequency chart in Figure 4. This chart represents the maximum width-to-maximum thickness ratios of 483 Clovis points. The upper chart in Figure 4 is a frequency chart of width-thickness ratios for Agate Basin, which represent 56 points from the Agate Basin Site (Frison and Stanford 1982). Both charts represent percentages instead of counts to normalize their sizes. The Clovis point ratios actually vary from 1.9 to 9.4, but I truncated the chart at 7.5 to enlarge the important parts in Figure 4. As I expected, Agate Basin points have the smaller width-to-thickness ratios. 96% of these points have ratios less than 3.9, while only 55% of the Clovis points are this thick. Additionally, the two populations are statistically different. Based on Figure 4, maybe I should

change my definition of Old Clovis to width-to-thickness ratios less than 3.9 and New Clovis as anything greater than 3.9.

Figure 5 is the same Clovis frequency chart that is in Figure 4, but the vertical scale has been enlarged. I did this to add images of Clovis points to illustrate how the points change across the frequency chart. Moving from left to right represents the evolution of Old Clovis to New Clovis that I proposed in 2004.

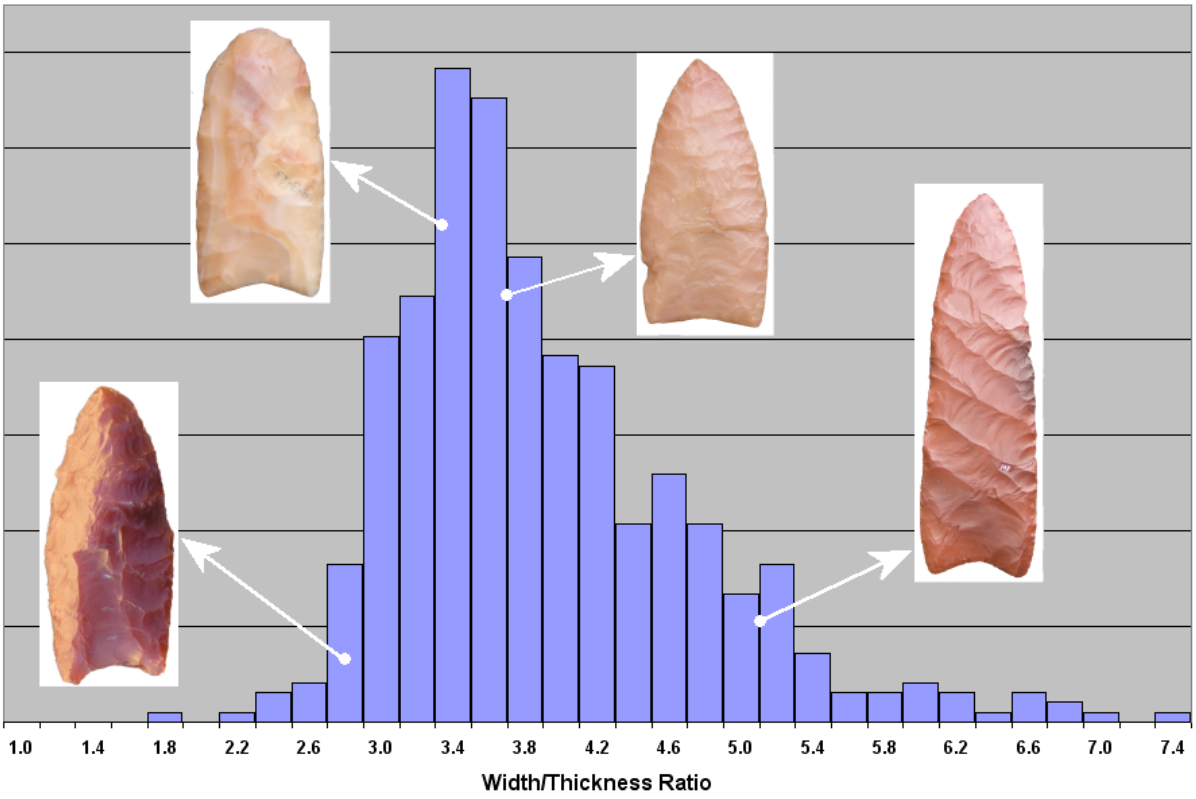

Figure 5

The second point (w/t = 3.3) from the left in Figure 5 is the first Clovis point I ever found. The other three are plastic casts that I used because I wanted complete points in the Figure. The point (w/t = 5.1) on the far right is the famous, diagonally flaked point from the Fenn Cache. The first and third points (w/t = 2.8 & 3.7) on the left are from Blackwater Draw. With the exception of the Fenn Cache point, all have been resharpened on the tips.

Figure 6 is a larger image of the point on the left in Figure 5, which is also the same point in the upper left in Figure 3. This point is an example of what I call Old Clovis and it fits better in the Agate Basin distribution than the Clovis one in Figure 4. In fact, I believe it is an Agate Basin and it has been re-tipped and re-based. The “flutes” are just a result of thinning the thick cross-section that occurs at a break.

Figure 6

As stated earlier, the point in Figure 6 is from Blackwater Draw and it is from one of the more interesting locations. It came from Conduit 2 (eye of the spring #2), which is located about 15 meters north of the "North Wall." There was no stratigraphy. There was just a hole of sand with "hundreds of flint artifacts", and a few bone fragments. Among the artifacts were two other points classified as Clovis, six Folsom points, one Midland point, and **eleven** Agate Basin points. Over the years it has been argued, but to no avail, that either the artifacts were placed in the spring or that they washed in during heavy rains. For what it is worth, there were nine more Agate Basin points found in a loose cluster located about five meters from Conduit 2 (Green 1992; Haynes and Agogino 1966).

Now, permit me to do a little layman's style probability. Assume there is a barrel of colored socks. Without looking, I pull from the barrel twenty socks. Two are white (Clovis points), six are blue (Folsom points), an orange sock (Midland point) and eleven black socks (Agate Basin). So, based on this sampling, would the reader bet a six-pack that the 21st sock I pull from the barrel will be orange (chances are 1 in 20)? How about it being a white sock (2 in 20)? The best bet is, of course, a black sock (11 in 20). Based on this logic, the point in Figure 6 has a much better chance being an Agate Basin than a Clovis point. In this little exercise, I assumed the other two points that were classified as Clovis were in fact Clovis points. I don't know this to be true because I have no images. If they were not, then the odds that the point in Figure 6 is a

Clovis point become nil based on the sampling. Expanding this logic to all Clovis points that have been found in the US, how many are in fact basally thinned thick-bodied points (Agate Basin or others)?

Chronologically, Agate Basin points have had an assorted history in the archaeological literature. As I pointed out in the *Revisited 2004* webpage, it was considered younger than Cody in 1957 (Wormington). Vance Haynes and Agogino said it was contemporary with Folsom at Blackwater Draw in 1966. By 1999, it was again younger than Folsom according to Boldurian and Cotter even though Sellet found it mixed with Folsom at the Hell Gap Site. Gary Haynes has it again equal in age with Folsom in 2002. Today, I believe if you ask the average archaeologist on the street they might agree that it is contemporary with the last part of Folsom, but I doubt most would give it an equal time depth, much less consider it contemporary with Clovis. So why does archaeology forget about the potential age of the Agate Basin point?

I personally believe that in the New World a bi-pointed, unfluted, thick-bodied point, similar to Agate Basin, is as old as Folsom, Clovis, and even older. They are older than Clovis in South America (Dillehay 1989), possibly older in Mexico (Wormington 1983) and as old in Alaska (Rasic 2003). They are also present in Siberia at Dyuktai Cave at 14,000-15,000 years BP (Mochanov and Fedoseeva 1996). So, why are they not as old as Clovis in the US? Has the glare that has reflected off the flute made archaeology forget that Clovis had to come from somewhere? And, that somewhere is most likely an unfluted, thick-bodied point.

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