A000-US-Points-Paleo-Folsom-rc

Folsom points are associated with the Folsom Tradition named after Folsom, New Mexico where the first sample was found within the bone structure of a bison in 1926. The term was first used in 1927 by Jesse Dade Figgins, director of the Colorado Museum of Natural History (Hillerman 1973). Folsom points are known from kill sites where slaughter and butchering of bison took place. About 11,000 BP (9000 BCE), the Folsom culture, also known as the Lindenmeier culture, replaced previous Clovis ways of life. Although direct evidence is lacking, some archaeologists believe that the atlatl or spear thrower was introduced at this time. This hunting accessory served to increase the length and leverage of the hunter's arm, causing the spear to be thrown further and with increased velocity. The Jones-Miller site in Colorado is a 10,000-year-old *bison antiquus* kill site where remains of about 300 animals were found in an arroyo (Wedel 1986:66). The bison were mainly cows with nursing calves suggesting a late fall kill site. Later historical accounts relate that bison were driven into snow-filled arroyos where they became mired, so that they could be more easily dispatched by the hunters. Thus, the historical information indicates that Folsom groups engaged in careful planning and coordination of their hunting and were able to carry out successful communal activities in which large groups worked together for their common advantage. As with historically documented communal hunters, the Folsom bands likely dispersed after seasonal game resources were depleted.

Evidence for Paleo religious life is quite sketchy. One suggestive feature was recovered from the Jones-Miller site mentioned above. A large post mold was discovered in the center of a bison bone bed. Associated with it were an antler flute, a projectile point, and butchered dog remains. These artifacts are reminiscent of the medicine post ceremony which was used among some historic northern Plains people to ensure successful hunting (Wedel 1986:66 ).

The Lindenmeier Site, the largest known Paleo-Indian Folsom site, contained artifacts of the Paleo-Indians who lived and hunted in the present Fort Collins area approximately 11,000 years ago. "The Lindenmeier site is in an unusual valley setting: a low-order tributary of the Cache La Poudre River, which joins the South Platte near the Klein and Powers sites. This tributary is in a small valley isolated along the escarpment that forms the physiographic boundary of the northern Colorado Piedmont and the High Plains"(Holliday and Mandel 2006:30). Some of the artifacts are of the Folsom tradition, and the Folsom points used for hunting the large, now extinct *Bison antiquus* and perhaps even the extinct North American Camel, *Camelops*: both disappeared at the end of the Pleistocene about 10,000 years ago (see Scott 2009).

References

Hillerman, Anthony G. (1973). "The Hunt for the Lost American". In The Great Taos Bank Robbery and Other Indian Country Affairs. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Holliday, Vance T. and Rolfe D. Mandel, 2006. "Geoarcheology Of The Plains, Southwest, And Great Lakes," Handbook Of North American Indians, Vol. 4 Environment, Origins, and Population. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.

Gantt, Erik M. 2002. “The Claude C. and A. Lynn Coffin Lindenmeier Collection.” M.A. Thesis: Colorado State University*.* [www.greybull.org/gantt\_thesis\_2002.pdf](http://www.greybull.org/gantt_thesis_2002.pdf).

Schwimmer, Brian, Virginia Petch, Linda Larcombe. 1998. Folsom Traditions. University of Manitoba. <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/manarchnet/chronology/paleoindian/folsom.html>

Scott, J. 2009. "Camel-butchering in Boulder, 13,000 years ago". Colorado Arts and Sciences Magazine. University of Colorado at Boulder.

Wedel, Waldo. 1986. *Central Plains Prehistory*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.  
  
1978 “The Prehistoric Plains.” In Jesse D. Jennings, ed., *Ancient Native Americans*, pp. 183-220. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.