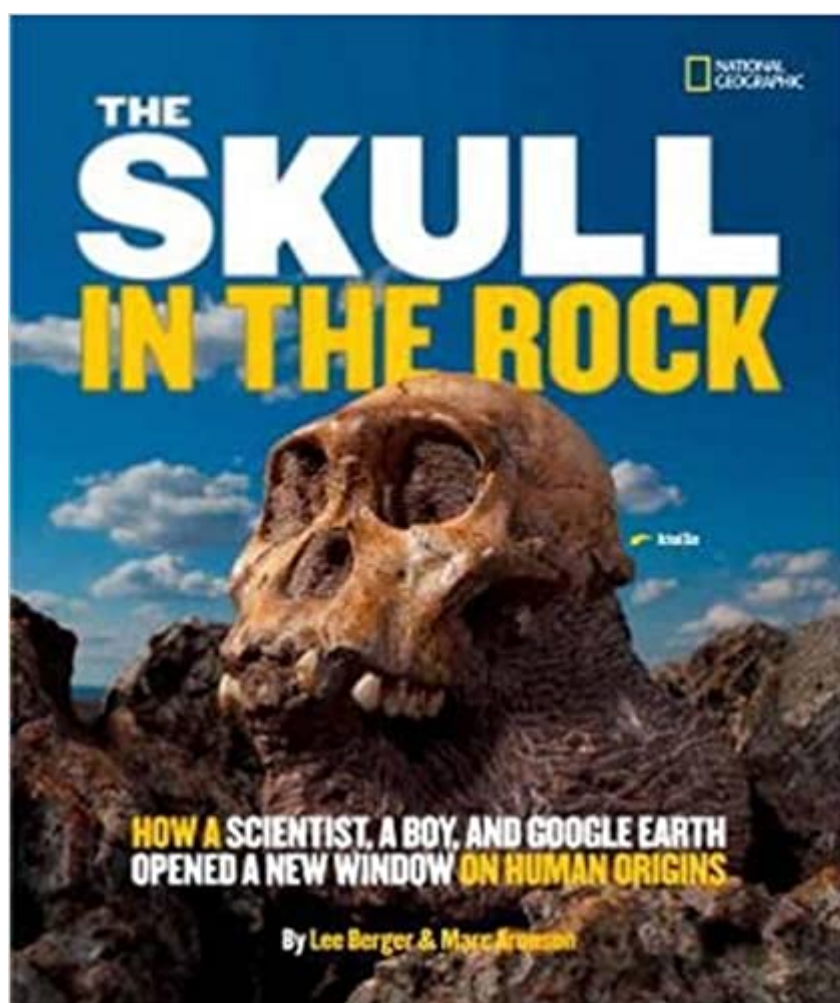


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# The Skull In The Rock: How A Scientist, A Boy, And Google Earth Opened A New Window On Human Origins (Science & Nature)



## Synopsis

From the fossil hunter who discovered the Homo naledi fossils in September 2015, this book is an amazing account of Lee Berger's 2008 hunt -- with the help of his curious 9-year-old son -- for a previously unknown species of ape-like creatures that may have been direct ancestors of modern humans. The discovery of two remarkably well preserved, two-million-year-old fossils of an adult female and young male, known as Australopithecus sediba, has been hailed as one of the most important archaeological discoveries in history. The fossils reveal what may be one of humankind's oldest ancestors. Berger believes the skeletons they found on the Malapa site in South Africa could be the "Rosetta stone that unlocks our understanding of the genus Homo" and may just redesign the human family tree. Berger, an Eagle Scout and National Geographic Grantee, is the Reader in Human Evolution and the Public Understanding of Science in the Institute for Human Evolution at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. The focus of the book will be on the way in which we can apply new thinking to familiar material and come up with a breakthrough. Marc Aronson is particularly interested in framing these issues for young people and has had enormous success with this approach in his previous books: *Ain't Nothing But a Man* and *If Stones Could Speak*. Berger's discovery in one of the most excavated and studied areas on Earth revealed a treasure trove of human fossils--and an entirely new human species--where people thought no more field work might ever be necessary. Technology and revelation combined, plus a good dose of luck, to broaden by ten times the number of early human fossils known, rejuvenating this field of study and posing countless more questions to be answered in years and decades to come. Releases simultaneously in Reinforced Library Binding: 978-1-4263-1053-9 , \$27.90/\$32.00

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In August 2008, in an area near Johannesburg, South Africa, called the Cradle of Humankind, nine-year-old Matthew Berger summoned his father, paleoanthropologist Lee Berger, with the words "Dad, I've found a fossil." Thus begins the fascinating tale of the discovery of a nearly complete skeleton of an entirely new species of early man. Aronson narrates the story of the gregarious Indiana Jones-like Berger, who grew up in rural Georgia with a penchant for exploring nature and went on to build a career around that passion. Part inspirational biography and part evolutionary science primer, this is written as if the participants are on an exciting treasure hunt, with the acknowledgment that the story continues to evolve and all findings should be shared. Aronson is a master at making almost any topic interesting, understandable, and entertaining, and here he tackles one with intrinsic mass appeal. The vividly designed and wonderfully photographed book includes helpful back matter featuring a unique model of human evolution and a well-organized combined glossary and index. Grades 5-7. --Randall Enos

CCBC's Book of Choice 2013! A Winner of The American Association for the Advancement of Science/Subaru Science Books & Films Prize for Excellence in Science Books! "Adding to a heap of impressive recent books about old bones, *The Skull in the Rock* provides a dual picture of science being practiced in all its current high-tech glory. The Washington Post "A fascinating account of an Indiana Jones-style fossil hunter and how his discoveries have changed the way we see human evolution." Kirkus Reviews "A fine pairing of an impassioned personality and scientific achievement." School Library Journal "Slim, enticing and totally accessible, this is a book that will open eyes to the world around us and, perhaps, inspire a whole new generation of Indies." Bookends, a Booklist Blog "Readers will be entranced with this story." Library Media Connection "The co-authors have given this photo- and imagined paintings-filled volume a fun, hands-on flavor by providing a number of series of captioned photos that demonstrate scientific processes utilized in the searching and evaluating of these new fossils." A Book and a Hug "The fossils Berger discovered reveal what may be one of humankind's oldest ancestors. The find has been hailed as one of the most important

archaeological discoveries in history." [Niagara Falls Review](#)"The focus of the book will be on the way in which we can apply new thinking to familiar material and come up with a breakthrough. Marc Aronson is particularly interested in framing these issues for young people and has had enormous success with this approach in his previous books." [GSWNY MLK Troop #30294](#)

As a science teacher and a fan of human origins, I was thrilled to have Lee Berger's *The Skull in the Rock* waiting in its box for me when I got home from school today. I read its 64 pages in a heartbeat and have to say I am very pleased with the high quality of this work. It is a tremendous challenge to find reading material about human origins that is suitable for middle school readers. This book not only does a fine job of introducing and explaining the main ideas involved in paleoanthropology, it also does a great job of presenting the PROCESS of science in an honest and exciting way for younger readers. I have no doubt that many of the boys and girls who read this will be stimulated to explore a future in science more seriously. I commend Drs Berger and Aronson on producing a rarity in scientific writing, a book that is exciting, inspiring, AND full of serious science. The science teacher in me wishes books such as this were the norm rather than the precious exception. This book is a GEM!

This book tells the story of scientist Lee Berger, and the important discovery he and his son made in 2004 with the finding of a 1.9m year old skeleton (actually more than one). The book introduces the topic of hominid research, human evolution, and how this type of science works--including dating methods relevant for fossils this age--within the context of telling the story of Lee's life: how a childhood outdoors and childhood interests led to his career and hope that he too would one day make a great discovery, his early career and disappointments, and how the discovery of Karabo finally came about. My eleven year old finished this book in a day and quite enjoyed it.

Really interesting book! My kids and I read this together while we were studying the origins of humanity. It is well written, great photos, interesting story and history. I would definitely recommend to anyone interested in ancient humans, fossil hominids, etc. My kids are in 3rd and 6th grade, and I am an adult, and we all enjoyed it.

Excellent

Excellent, but short.

Great

This is for my grandson who loves history and science.

My grandson loved this book!

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