

from 17 archaeological sites revealed geographic variability in the types of stone tool and techniques used to make them. The most similar tool assemblages tended to be those found closest to one another or those linked by green passageways.

Human populations in North Africa, including those that eventually colonized Europe and Asia, lived in semi-isolated groups that rarely mixed, the authors say.

Quat. Sci. Rev. 101, 207–216 (2014)

MATERIALS SCIENCE

Flexible solar cells work both ways

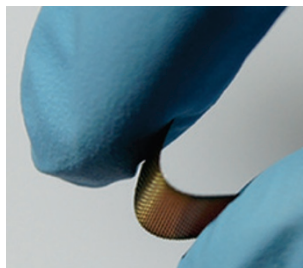
Material scientists have created a wearable fabric that can gather solar energy from either side.

Huisheng Peng at Fudan University in Shanghai and his colleagues made the material (pictured) by sandwiching

a textile, woven from metal fibres coated with a photoactive polymer, between two transparent and conductive carbon-nanotube sheets. The sandwich design means that the polymer solar cells can convert light to electricity regardless of whether they are illuminated from the top or bottom. This could make the fabric simpler to integrate into devices.

The cells convert just 1% of sunlight into electricity. But with efficiency improvements, the fabric could be used to power portable electronics, the authors say.

Angew. Chem. Int. Ed. <http://doi.org/f2tqbp> (2014)



SOCIAL SELECTION

Popular articles on social media

Fresh arguments over old data

Every once in a while, an academic argument turns into a social-media spectacle. A collision over a seemingly innocuous subject — genes and the pursuit of happiness — has attracted a large number of onlookers.

In 2013, a paper concluded that a person's approach to happiness can shape gene expression (B. L. Fredrickson *et al.* *Proc. Natl Acad. Sci. USA* 110, 13684–13689; 2013). The study and its first author, psychologist Barbara Fredrickson at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, received much media attention at the time, but a new report by US and UK researchers claims that the findings were “artifacts of dubious analysis and erroneous methodology”. Stuart Ritchie, a human-intelligence researcher at the University of Edinburgh, UK, evidently enjoyed the show, as revealed by his tweet: “This demolition of a ‘genetics of wellbeing’ paper raised my wellbeing by a considerable amount.”

Proc. Natl Acad. Sci. USA <http://doi.org/vfp> (2014)



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