

# Uncovering the Legacy of the **Hominin Cast Collection** at the Field Museum

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**Friday, September 25, 2026**  
**12 –1 pm**  
**Hatcher Library**  
**Gallery Lab (Room 100H)**



Georgia Oppenheim, Field Museum of Natural History Chicago, IL (2026)

Because fossils of our human ancestors (hominins) remain in their country of discovery, museum collections relating to human origins predominantly consist of casts. These cast collections are often overlooked and undervalued in human origins research since they are not the original fossils. But, these collections hold untapped research and teaching potential. During my internship, I explored the 90-year legacy of human origins research at the Field Museum in Chicago through the reorganization of their hominin cast collection.

This talk highlights how I used my background on human evolution to contextualize the collection in support of teaching, exhibition development, and science communication. Overall, this case study demonstrates the how deeper investigations into museum collections can create new avenues for research and support broader museum goals.

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