

Peer Review

Review of: "Collective Pareidolia"

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The Qeios article 'Collective Pareidolia' by Robert Bednarik is an intriguing story, but seems so incredulous to readily accept.

There appears to be one important component of the story that is missing.

I find it difficult to understand that if the process of taking impressions from a rock surface by the students was done correctly, how this could not represent the ridges and depressions on the rock surface examined. The important piece of evidence that I believe is missing from the manuscript is a description of the three rock art specialists undertaking the 'traditional' rubbing of the rock surface and showing a completely different image to that obtained by the students from the same rock surface. If these 'traditional' surface rubbings were undertaken, the evidence should be added to the manuscript.

The manuscript also does not make clear whether different students obtained the same or different images from the same rock surface. If the latter, examples of the different images obtained by individual, 'non-colluding' students from the same rock would strengthen the arguments for collective pareidolia.

Another part of the story that is perplexing relates to the person who first encountered the 'petroglyphs'. Why would a '*student of ancient rock art*' visualise petroglyphs that were not present in the area near the summerhouse? An additional section in the manuscript on whether or not there were records, either written or oral, about the existence of rock images in the area or whether the area had particular spiritual or cultural significance to its ancient occupants may help explain these sightings.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.