European Bog Bodies: From the Iron Age Peat Bog to the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century

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Agenda

- Introduction
  - Background
  - Preservation
  - Mummy vs. Bog Body
- Methods
- Analysis/Discussion
- Conclusion
Introduction
Background

- Individuals have been dated from 8000 BCE through WWI
- Scattered across northwestern Europe (England, Ireland, Denmark particularly)
- Focus on the Iron Age (Four individuals)
- Many have been attributed to ritual violence
Preservation

- Interred in Peat Bogs
- Slowing of putrefaction resulting in mummification caused by the polysaccharide Sphagnan
- Mallard reaction
- Causes decalcification of bony tissues, resulting in preservation of soft tissues
Importance of Preservation

- Soft tissue provides evidence of trauma, as well as, pathological conditions
- This process also is apt at preserving other organic tissues
Negative aspects of Preservation

- Decalcification makes examination of bony tissues difficult, particularly in cases of trauma vs. taphonomy.
- Removal of remains from the peat bog may cause shrinkage, causing bone deformation due to pliability.
Bog Body vs. Traditional Mummy

Bog Body
- Preserved due to chemical processes in peat bogs
- Preservation of soft tissues
- Bone decalcification
- Wet environment

Mummy
- Preserved due to human intervention, or environmental factors (bog bodies are natural mummies).
- Preservation of soft tissues
- Bone maintains integrity
- Dry environment
Mummies
Methods/Purpose

- Examining previous research
- How historical interpretations have been affected by modern technologies
Analysis/Discussion
Graubelle Man

- 1952, Nebelgaard Bog, Denmark
- “Over-Kill” Theory and ritual violence
- CT-Scanning
Tollund Man

- Jutland Peninsula, Denmark
- Cranial Fracturing
- Preserved with a Sheepskin cap, leather belt, and two strand leather cord
Weerdinge Couple

- 1904, Netherlands
- Potential evidence for ritual violence
Conclusions


