

A Tale of Two Neanderthals

Chapter 1: A Tale of Two Neanderthals

The following short story is meant to illustrate basic economic concepts, not to be in any way historically accurate. Also, the fact that the two inventors in the story, Borgg and Glogg, happen to be male should in no way be construed as implying two females could not have been the inventors. I hope I have at least partly atoned for this transgression of political correctness by making the two men Neanderthals. Which reminds me...any resemblance of the characters in this story to real persons, either living or deceased, is purely coincidental.

Borgg and Glogg were two middle-aged Neanderthals in their mid-twenties who were about to become famous. They had just invented firesticks, which would later be known as “matches”.

Glogg, the budding chemist, had discovered that if he ground two different colored rocks together, and then put the resulting powder in the fire, a large flame was produced.

Glogg showed this amazing finding to Borgg, who immediately started thinking about the possibilities. Borgg remembered that there was another kind of rock powder which, when mixed with water and allowed to dry, turned back into stone. Hmmm...

Borgg and Glogg spent a few suns (days) mixing different amounts of the three powders together with water, then putting little dabs of the goop on the ends of twigs and letting it dry overnight. They finally succeeded in developing just the right combination of powders that would cause the tip of the firestick (Borgg’s suggested name for the invention) to burst into flame when it was quickly rubbed across a smooth stone.