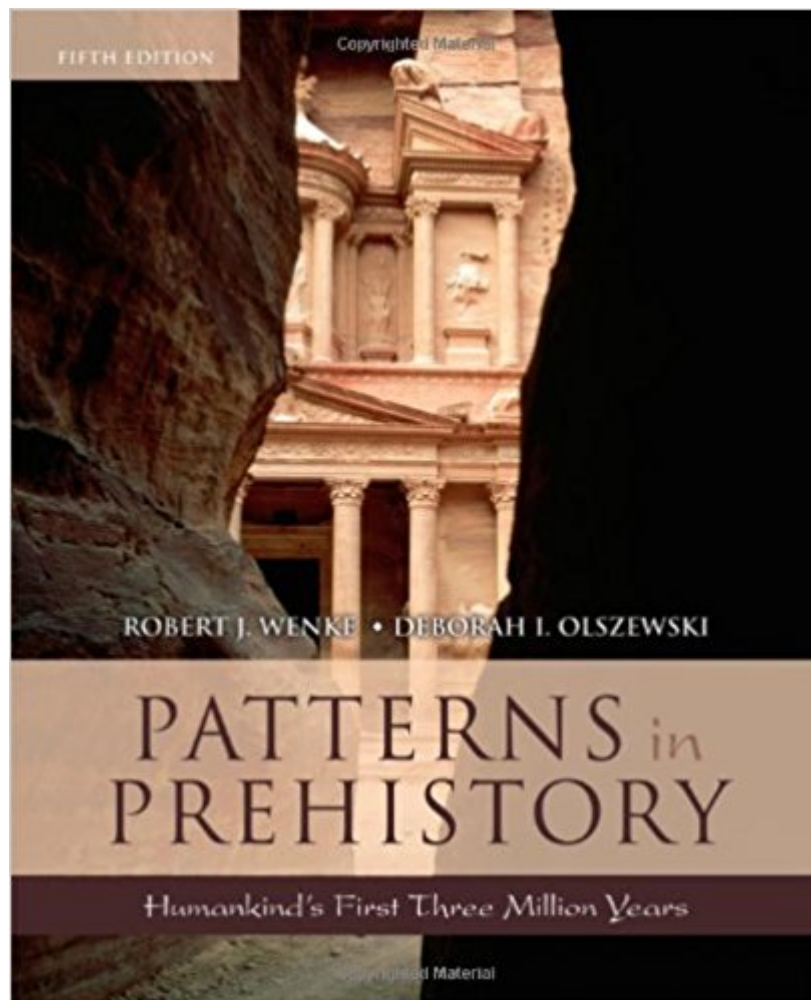




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Patterns In Prehistory: Humankind's First Three Million Years, 5th Edition (Casebooks In Criticism)



Synopsis

Who are we? How did the world become what it is today? What paths did humanity traverse along the way? *Patterns in Prehistory, Fifth Edition*, is a comprehensive and engaging survey of humanity's past three million years. It brings together theories and archaeological examples to pose questions about who we are and the means by which humanity evolved into what it is today. Ideal for introductory courses in world prehistory and origins of complex societies, *Patterns in Prehistory, Fifth Edition*, offers a unified and thematic approach to the four great transformations--or patterns--that characterize humanity's past: the origins and evolution of culture; the origins of modern humans and human behaviors; the origins of agriculture; and the origins of complex societies, civilizations, and pre-industrial states. Integrating theoretical approaches with archaeological data from the Middle East, Mesoamerica, North and South America, Egypt, China, the Indus Valley, and temperate Europe, *Patterns in Prehistory, Fifth Edition*, reveals how archaeologists decipher the past. It demonstrates how theory and method are combined to derive interpretations and also considers how interpretations evolve as a result of accumulating data, technological advances in recording and analyzing data sets, and newer theoretical perspectives. This new edition of *Patterns in Prehistory* provides:

- * Fresh insights with the addition of coauthor Deborah Olszewski, who has carefully reviewed and revamped the material with an eye toward making the text clearly understandable to today's students
- * Updated discussions throughout, including expanded information on post-processual archaeology, current methodologies, and technological advances
- * Approximately 250 illustrations and maps, more than half of which are new to this edition
- * Groundbreaking research on new discoveries of hominin fossils, genetic research, prehistoric migrations, the peopling of the Americas, and theories of the origins of agriculture and the origins of complex societies
- * Timelines for all relevant chapters as well as an overarching timeline for the entire book to help students place events in context
- * Extensively updated chapter bibliographies and chapter endnotes

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I've read the entire volume, word for word, in part because I continue to learn new things from every revision of Wenke's work. It continues to be the best introductory book on world prehistory on the market. The text is easily accessible and serious at the same time, and I highly recommend it for courses that are designed as overviews of the emergence of modern humans as a biological and social species."--Terence N. D'Altroy, Columbia University

"Patterns in Prehistory does a better job of covering the whole scope of archaeological achievement than any other book on the market."--Paul Zimansky, Boston University

Robert J. Wenke is at University of Washington. Deborah I. Olszewski is at University of Pennsylvania.

A Marvelous book. Quick delivery.

It is very interesting and comprehensive i think as english is not my native language. A perfect introduction for historians, archaeologists and even egyptologists. It gives us a lot of useful information for the past of the civilizations.

Mostly good condition with mild wear from being used before, but still good quality. *had to buy it for a course so material is obviously what I needed it for.*

The information presented in the book is definitely interesting. But I feel that they could have tried to make the book flow a little better, I found it very difficult to read.

Perfect condition.

I bought this book because it was cheaper but I do expect the books to be clean. There was either BBQ sauce in the book or blood. Since the class I'm taking has already begun, I am keeping the book. However, it is kind of disconcerting and I feel the need to wash my hands every time I study. Sorry, but the price was right now it just needed to be a little cleaner.

This book suffers from the same issues that plague most modern treatises on human development: these revolve around an overreliance on inquiries better described as attempts to denigrate humans and their history to the level of helpless animals, victims of circumstance, rather than conscious actors worthy of rights and admiration. Wenke sometimes demonstrates an overreliance on FAITH in "natural selection" over the quite obvious SCIENTIFIC history of ingenuity displayed by humans. He gives credence to those who insist that human development cannot be viewed through an empathetic lens, erroneously insisting without evidence that the human experience is so markedly different between one culture to the next that we cannot HOPE to understand our ancestors without the dogmatic tenets of natural selection. Though humans are indeed irrational, human development can be attributed to conscious decision-making quite a bit more so than indicated by some of the authors Wenke relies on. Still, Wenke's analysis is spot on and relatively unbiased (I will say, I hated the jokes re: domestication goes both ways). He does an EXCELLENT job formulating a typology for developmental understanding in describing the evolution of complex societies and the inequalities therein created. The discursive nature of the book is also quite appropriate for a subject where we numerous competing theories abound. Overall, I love the book, but some slight improvements could be made.

This is a well-written, well-organized book. Disregard the review of the other reviewer who gave it only one star for reasons that have nothing to do with the content of the book. I enjoyed reading/studying this book and can only highly recommend it for people who have a strong interest in archeology.

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