



The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins

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Described as "by far the best book of its kind" (Henry McHenry, *Evolution*) and "the best introduction to the problems and data of modern palaeoanthropology yet published" (R. A. Foley, *Antiquity*), *The Human Career* has proved to be an indispensable tool in teaching human origins since its publication in 1989. This substantially revised edition retains Richard Klein's innovative approach and incorporates new findings from the past decade.

The Human Career chronicles the evolution of people from the earliest primates through the emergence of fully modern humans within the past 200,000 years. Its comprehensive treatment stresses recent advances in knowledge, including, for example, ever more abundant evidence that fully modern humans originated in Africa and spread from there, replacing the Neanderthals in Europe and equally archaic people in Asia. With its coverage of both the fossil record and the archeological record over the 2.5 million years for which both are available, Klein emphasizes that human morphology and behavior evolved together. Throughout the text, Klein presents evidence for alternative points of view, but also does not hesitate to take a position.

In addition to outlining the broad pattern of human evolution, *The Human Career* details the kinds of data that support this pattern, including information on archeological sites, artifacts, fossils, and methods for establishing dates in geological time. With abundant references and hundreds of illustrations, charts, and diagrams, this new edition is unparalleled in its usefulness for teaching human evolution.

The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins Details

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From Reader Review The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins for online ebook

Captain Sir Roddy, R.N. (Ret.) says

This review is associated with the 3rd Edition of Richard G. Klein's *The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins* (2009)--

Wow! Nearly one month later I have actually come to the end of this most amazing book. My hat is off to Dr Klein, as *The Human Career: Human Biological and Cultural Origins* is arguably the most thorough and comprehensive, yet eminently readable, treatise associated with paleoanthropology, archaeology and human evolution that I've yet to encounter. While the book was primarily written to serve as a textbook in a university environment, its organization and explanation of the material makes it completely approachable and understandable by even the casual layperson. If you like history with a liberal dose of good science thrown in, you just might find yourself as enchanted as I was.

The nearly 800 pages of actual text is organized into eight solidly fascinating chapters, including--

1. Evolution, Classification, and Nomenclature
2. The Geologic Time frame
3. The Primate Background
4. The Australopiths and *Homo habilis*
5. Evolution of the Genus *Homo*
6. The Neanderthals and Their Contemporaries
7. Anatomically Modern Humans
8. Synopsis: Anatomy, Behavior, and Modern Human Origins

The presentation and organization of the material allows the reader to easily grasp the important concepts and salient details. Whether it is an in-depth discussion of anatomical details, archaeological artifact assemblages, habitat usage or cyclical climate-change records, speculations or observations in behavioral psychology, or even the latest important genetics information, Dr. Klein's explanations and descriptions of the relevant data and information in each of the chapters was always engaging, very well written, and always quite thought-provoking. I consider myself a fairly well-educated amateur, but very enthusiastic, paleoanthropologist, and I learned something new on virtually every page of this book.

I do need to point out that it is abundantly clear that Dr. Klein is largely (if not firmly) a proponent of the "Out-of-Africa" model associated with modern human origins. But he is also quite candid and forthcoming in describing the few shortcomings of the hypothesis that cannot currently be reconciled with existing data and/or the fossil evidence. Additionally, Dr. Klein spends a good bit of the last three chapters building the case not only for the Out-of Africa model of modern human origins and dispersal, but also the cultural explosion--the result of a new type of modern human behavior--that occurred about 50,000 years ago, and quite likely provided the impetus for the mass-migration from eastern Africa and out across Eurasia, into western Europe, to Australia, across Asia and Siberia and finally into the Americas. While I have been generally pretty familiar with much of this information, it was only through reading this book that I was able to put the whole picture together; starting with the Australopiths, and then into the Genus *Homo*, concluding with the stark fact that of all the human species we are the last one, *Homo sapiens*. The synthesis and synopsis provided in the last chapter was simply astounding, and was so damned interesting I read it twice. In sum, Dr. Klein tells a story in this book that is both deeply compelling and fascinating.

Finally, I also want to highly recommend the system of references and bibliographic citations that Dr. Klein

has provided associated with the material in this book. At the end of each section within each of the chapters, Dr. Klein provides a brief compendium of the source material for each of the subjects discussed in that section. One can then refer to the extensive, nearly 200 pages, of references at the end of the book. Trust me, this system works well, and the extensive references are certainly 'worth the price of admission' on their own. Dr. Klein also provides a comprehensive Site Index that allows the interested reader to specifically look up an archaeological site. He has also provided a Reference Index (by author/researcher) as well as the obligatory Subject Index. As I said at the beginning, this is a comprehensive reference and resource, and I'm very glad to have this on my bookshelf now.

Kass says

A great bioanthropology text.

Peter says

Actually I'm reading the Nook edition.

Michael says

Read this if you want to discourage yourself from studying physical anthropology.

Evelyn says

listed in guns germs and steel
