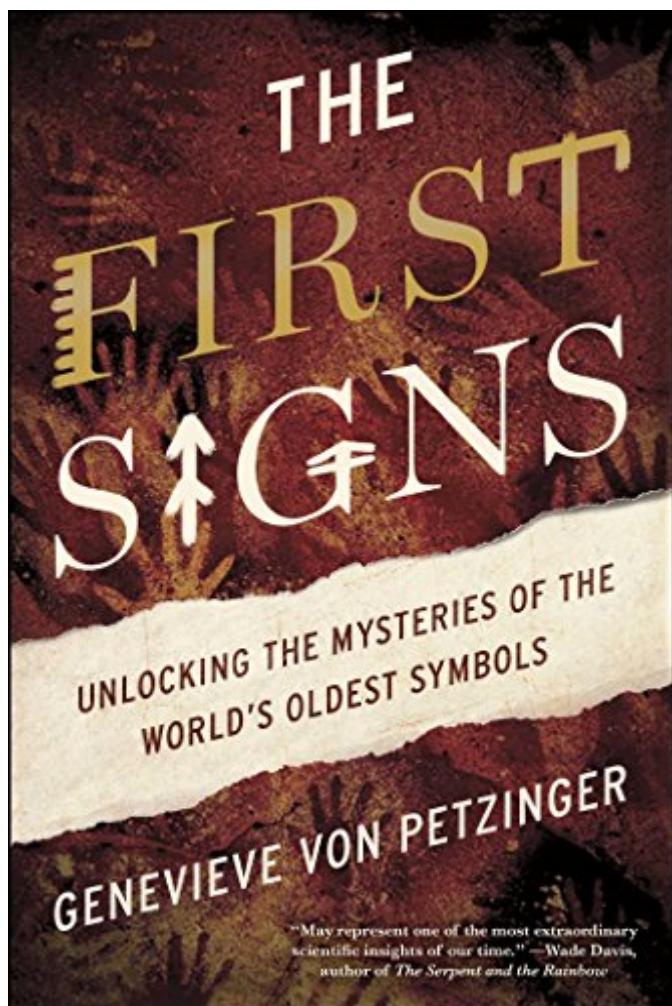


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The First Signs: Unlocking The Mysteries Of The World's Oldest Symbols



Synopsis

“If you love mysteries, you’ll love this book. Genevieve von Petzinger acts as guide and sleuth in this fascinating, accessible, and fast-paced exploration of Ice Age artists and the evocative cave paintings they left behind” (Virginia Morell, author of *Animal Wise* and *Ancestral Passions*). In an adventure worthy of Indiana Jones, archeologist von Petzinger explores the little-known geometric cave art of our ancient ancestors—perhaps the first form of human written communication and a key to unlocking some of the mysteries of our ancient past. These “remarkable” (Jean Auel, author of the bestselling *Earth’s Children* series) findings “may represent one of the most extraordinary scientific insights of our time” (Wade Davis, author of *The Serpent and the Rainbow*). Join von Petzinger as she travels throughout Europe and attempts to crack the code of these strange symbols, which persisted virtually unchanged for some 30,000 years. Clearly meaningful to their creators, these geometric signs are one of the first indicators of our human ancestors’ intelligence and capacity for symbolic meaning and language—glimpses across millennia of an ancient consciousness linked to our own. Part travel journal, part popular science, and part personal narrative, this groundbreaking investigation explores what makes us human, how we evolved as a species, and how this cave art laid the foundation for so much of the technology that we enjoy today.

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful book that explores an understudied subject with breadth and depth. I have read a number of books about cave art and I loved the connections that she made, not isolating the "signs" from the art that has been studied, photographed, copied, and written about so extensively. Her scientific methods are reassuring and her careful, thoughtful hypotheses are fascinating. Chapter 13, The Lady of St.-Germain-la-Reviere and Her Mysterious Necklace, brought an amazed gasp of astonishment and appreciation.

Excellent book. Anyone interested in rock art or archaeology should purchase this book. Well written and very informative. Although I am more focused on pre-Columbia archaeology much of the information in the book was still very interesting and useful. For instance who knew that weaving and other textiles have been traced back 30,000 years. This will affect how "New World" archaeologists think about the "origin" of textiles in this country.

Gift for my husband, who is very interested in early cave paintings... he assumed nobody had tried to figure out the many smaller elements/representations in cave paintings, and is excited about the research presented in this book!

A very interesting book covering a subject that is really unique, which concerns the meaning of symbolic writing that goes back to over 40,000 years ago. The author does an amazing job of taking a subject that has really no hard answers to it, and presents it in such a way that it comes across understandable, as well as very fascinating. A great presentation that unfortunately raises more questions that can possibly be answered. Would definitely recommend this to anyone interested in early man and early society. The book is well written and well edited, with a great selection of photographs that contribute to understanding the mystery of the earliest signs.

It was interesting, but not captivating.

Must read if you are into art caves!!.....

Genevieve is on to something groundbreaking. The first attempts to "draw" language.

A terrific read which goes beyond the title and draws in the living conditions, migration histories, rituals, use of materials and artefacts which are so recognisable to us to piece together a long period of early sapiens' life. The author also relates well how difficult to access some sites are and the conditions of work. Material discoveries continue to be made, so I look forward to updates. I would suggest that a time chart with markings of the various sites and climatic phases would be a good inclusion. Also some sites have consecutive Neanderthal and Sapiens use. That could be expanded on specially since we continue to learn more about Neanderthal through DNA advances and new sites.

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