



Mixed Messages: Cultural and Genetic Inheritance in the Constitution of Human Society (Paperback)

By Robert A. Paul

The University of Chicago Press, United States, 2015. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. As social and symbolic animals - animals with language and systems of signs - humans are informed by two different kinds of heritage, one biological, the other cultural. Scholars have tended to study our genetic and symbolic lineages separately, but in recent years some have begun to explore them together, offering a dual inheritance theory. In this book, Robert A Paul offers an entirely new and original consideration of our dual inheritance, going deep inside an extensive ethnographic record to outline a fascinating relationship between our genetic codes and symbolic systems. Examining a wide array of cultures, Paul reveals how the inherent tensions between these two modes of transmission generate many of the features of human society, such as marriage rules, initiation rituals, gender asymmetry, and sexual symbolism. Exploring differences in the requirements, range, and agendas of genetic and symbolic reproduction, he shows that a properly conceived dual inheritance model does a better job of accounting for the distinctive character of actual human societies than either evolutionary or sociocultural construction theories can do alone. Ultimately this book offers a powerful call for a...



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