



The Nature of Difference: Science, Society and Human Biology (PBK) (Society for the Study of Human Biology)

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Unprecedented advances in genetics and biotechnology have brought profound new insights into human biological variation. These present challenges and opportunities for understanding the origins of human nature, the nature of difference, and the social practices these sustain. This provides an opportunity for cooperation between the biological and social sciences – one that is capable of prompting a synergistic exchange of ideas with far-reaching implications.

The Nature of Difference critically analyses biological explanations for morality, criminality, race, sexuality, and disability. Based on the 45th annual symposium of the *Society for the Study of Human Biology*, this work synthesizes the perspectives of established experts in the field of human biology with those studying the social meanings of human biological variation and scientific practices in human biological research.

Some questions addressed by The Nature of Difference:

- Is there a biological basis for morality, criminality, witchcraft, sexuality or disability?
- What do comparisons of humans and apes tell us about society?
- How do people draw on scientific methods to justify racism?
- Why do geneticists continue to use racial categories in their research?
- Do ethical guidelines constrain or facilitate research into human biology?
- Can science and society escape from biological determinism?

As biotechnology expands the frontiers of what we know and what we are able to do, and as the genomic revolution moves out of the laboratory and into our daily lives, we are faced with a number of pressing social issues that need to be resolved. Offering an unparalleled collection of multidisciplinary perspectives on the meanings of biological diversity, this book provides readers with a vibrant analysis which revisits these issues with deepened insight from contrasting yet complementary perspectives.

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