



The Character of Human Institutions: Robin Fox and the Rise of Biosocial Science

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This volume celebrates the life and work of Robin Fox and the idea of a biosocial science. From his early studies of kinship, primates, the brain, evolution, the incest taboo, and aggression, to his later work on literature, politics, civilization, law, the Bible, Shakespeare, and the history of ideas, Robin Fox inspired many with an evolutionary vision of humanity that goes beyond narrow disciplinary boundaries and embraces the "universal history of mankind." Fox's work represents an independent "biosocial science" stream of thinking that accepts the Darwinian mandate while avoiding reductionism by recognizing culture as a natural phenomenon.

The essays cover Fox's life and his contributions, and address topics as diverse as the meaning and function of laughter; the unforgiving discipline of writing popular anthropology; extreme drinking rituals among young men training for the British army; Darwin and close-cousin marriage; the universal essence of the epic form as a super-attractor; anthropologists' autobiographies; the conflict between science and anti-science; and the decline of British imperial education.

This engaging collection on a "mainstream maverick" has been edited by Michael Egan. It includes essays by Sir Antony Jay, Lionel Tiger, Howard Bloom, Michael McGuire, Kate Fox, Melvin Konner, Alan Macfarlane, Adam Kuper, Dieter Steklis, Alexandra Maryanski, Bernard Chapais, Jonathan Turner, Linda Stone, Charles Macdonald, Anne Fox, David Jenkins, Frederick Turner, Robert Trivers, and an essay by Robin Fox himself.

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