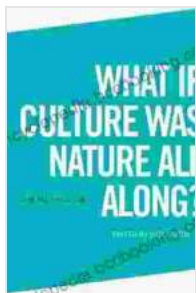


What If Culture Was Nature All Along?

New Materialisms and the Dissolution of the Culture-Nature Divide

For centuries, we have compartmentalized the world into distinct realms of "nature" and "culture." Nature has been relegated to the realm of the physical, while culture has been seen as a purely human construct. But what if this dichotomy is a false one? What if, in reality, culture and nature are inextricably intertwined, and indeed indistinguishable? This is the provocative question that drives "What If Culture Was Nature All Along?"

In this groundbreaking work, scholars from diverse fields explore the emerging paradigm of "new materialism," which challenges the traditional separation of culture and nature. Through in-depth case studies and theoretical analysis, they demonstrate that culture is not something that is superimposed on nature but rather an intrinsic part of the natural world. As one of the contributors, anthropologist Eduardo Kohn, argues, "Culture is not something that humans add to nature; it is something that nature does."



What if Culture was Nature all Along? (New Materialisms)

- ★★★★★ 5 out of 5
- Language : English
 - File size : 533 KB
 - Text-to-Speech : Enabled
 - Screen Reader : Supported
 - Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
 - X-Ray for textbooks : Enabled
 - Print length : 272 pages



The implications of this perspective are profound, as it calls into question the very foundations of our understanding of the world and our place within it. If culture is nature, then it follows that we are not outside or above the natural world but rather an integral part of it. This realization has the potential to transform how we think about our relationship with the environment, our bodies, and even ourselves.

The essays in "What If Culture Was Nature All Along?" cover a wide range of topics, from the materiality of language to the agency of nonhuman entities. Collectively, they provide a compelling body of evidence that challenges the traditional culture-nature divide and opens up new possibilities for understanding both culture and nature.

Key Concepts and Case Studies

The Materiality of Culture

* Anthropologist Laura Nader examines the materiality of emotions in a study of witchcraft accusations in Papua New Guinea. Nader shows how emotions are not simply mental states but are embodied in material objects and practices. * Art historian Hans Belting argues that images are not mere representations of reality but are rather active agents that shape our understanding of the world.

The Agency of Nonhuman Entities

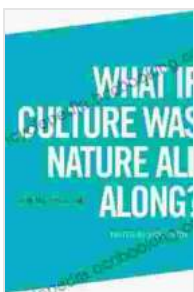
* Philosopher Timothy Morton posits that nonhuman entities, such as plants and animals, are not passive objects but rather have their own agency and intentionality. * Ecologist Natasha Myers explores the role of plants in

human-environment interactions, showing how plants play an active role in shaping the social and cultural landscape.

The Interdependency of Culture and Nature

* Medical anthropologist Didier Fassin examines the relationship between illness and culture in Senegal. Fassin argues that illness cannot be understood solely in biological terms but is also a product of cultural and social factors. * Architect Keller Easterling explores the material and cultural dimensions of infrastructure, showing how infrastructure both shapes and is shaped by the natural environment.

"What If Culture Was Nature All Along?" is an essential read for anyone interested in the relationship between culture and nature. It is a groundbreaking work that challenges the traditional separation of these two realms and offers a new perspective on the world and our place within it. By dissolving the culture-nature divide, the book opens up new possibilities for understanding both culture and nature and for rethinking our relationship with the world around us.



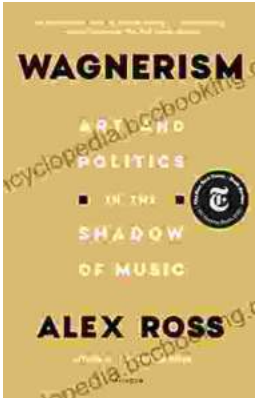
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