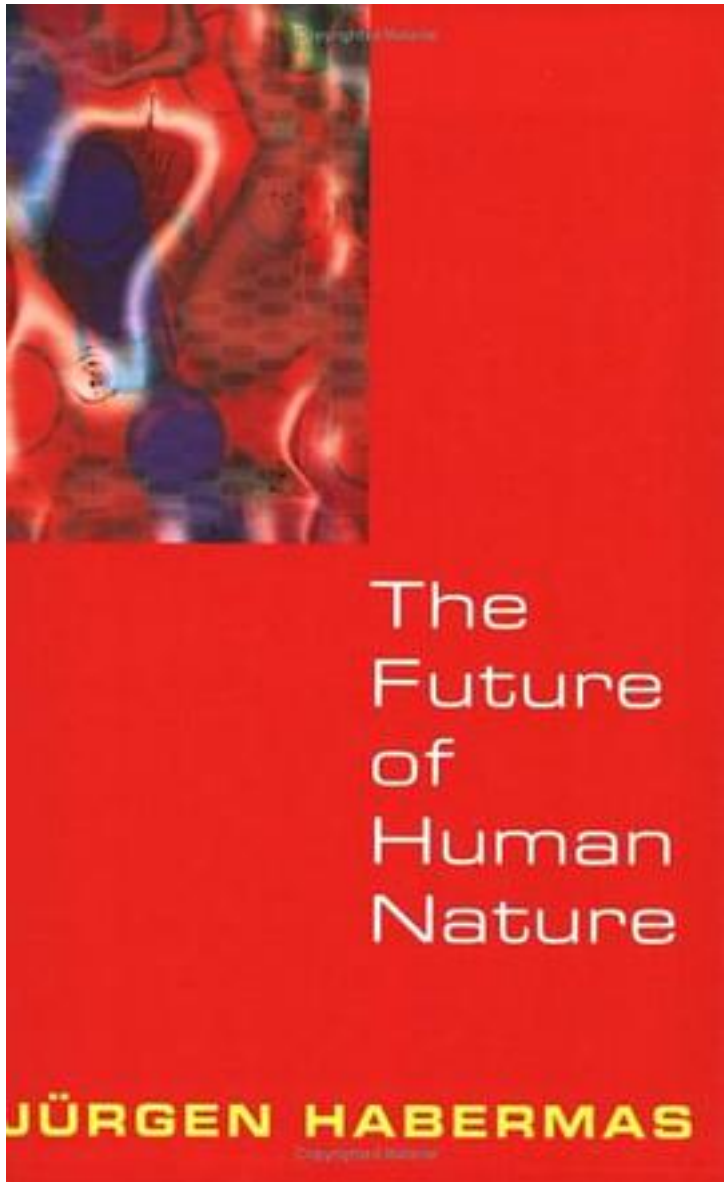


The Future of Human Nature



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Recent developments in biotechnology and genetic research are raising complex ethical questions concerning the legitimate scope and limits of genetic intervention. As we begin to contemplate the possibility of intervening in the human genome to prevent diseases, we cannot help but feel that the human species might soon be able to take its biological evolution in its own hands. 'Playing God' is the metaphor commonly used for this self-transformation of the species, which, it seems, might soon be within our grasp.

In this important new book, Jurgen Habermas - the most influential philosopher and social thinker in Germany today - takes up the question of genetic engineering and its ethical implications and subjects it to careful philosophical scrutiny. His analysis is guided by the view that genetic manipulation is bound up with the identity and self-understanding of the species. We cannot rule out the possibility that knowledge of one's own hereditary factors may prove to be restrictive for the choice of an individual's way of life and may undermine the symmetrical relations between free and equal human beings.

In the concluding chapter - which was delivered as a lecture on receiving the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for 2001 - Habermas broadens the discussion to examine the tension between science and religion in the modern world, a tension which exploded, with such tragic violence, on September 11th.

作者介绍:

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