



Technology as Human Social Tradition: Cultural Transmission among Hunter-Gatherers (Origins of Human Behavior and Culture)

Peter David Jordan

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Technology as Human Social Tradition outlines a novel approach to studying variability and cumulative change in human technology—prominent research themes in both archaeology and anthropology. Peter Jordan argues that human material culture is best understood as an expression of social tradition. In this approach, each artifact stands as an output of a distinctive operational sequence with specific choices made at each stage in its production. Jordan also explores different material culture traditions that are propagated through social learning, factors that promote coherent lineages of tradition to form, and the extent to which these cultural lineages exhibit congruence with one another and with language history.

Drawing on the application of cultural transmission theory to empirical research, Jordan develops a descent-with-modification perspective on the technology of Northern Hemisphere hunter-gatherers. Case studies from indigenous societies in Northwest Siberia, the Pacific Northwest Coast, and Northern California provide cross-cultural insights related to the evolution of material culture traditions at different social and spatial scales. This book promises new ways of exploring some of the primary factors that generate human cultural diversity in the deep past and through to the present.

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