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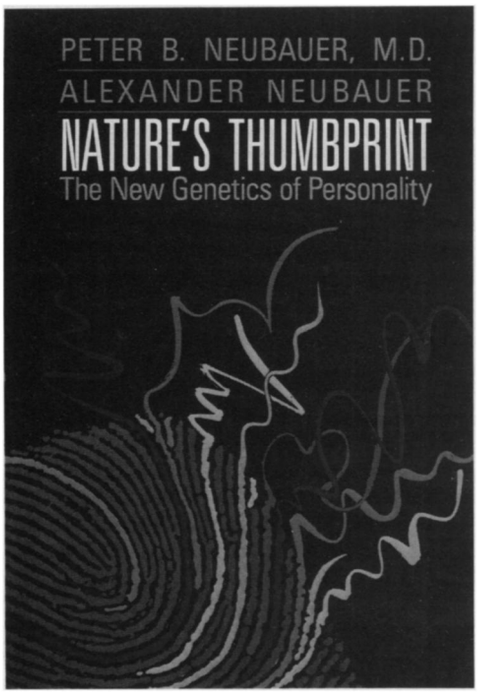
Chemical Unicorns



Genes determine our eye color, blood type and tendency toward certain diseases. That much is clear. But when it comes to our psychological traits — who we are and what we can become — few people would credit genes with a major role in human development. For most of this century, we have considered parents and the general environment to be the primary sculptors of personality, and have bestowed on them all the credit for our triumphs and the blame for our failures. The authors show how our genes affect the way we react to the world, interact with it, and behave in many situations. **Nature's Thumbprint** explores the range of inborn inclinations upon which personality is later built: individual timetables of maturation; adaptation to the family and the environment; reasons why some children are more vulnerable to environmental obstacles than others; and why some parents are stymied by children who do not match their expectations, while others respond in positive ways. It offers a hopeful message to us all, for only when we understand the biological as well as the psychological underpinnings of personality can we come to a genuine understanding of ourselves and our lives.

— from the publisher

Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1990, 223 pages, 6½" x 10", hardcover, $17.95

"In Nature's Thumbprint *the subtle, dynamic interaction of nature and nurture is brought into dramatic focus."*

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Mathematics and the Unexpected attempts to answer the question, What do mathematicians do? The author is a well-known mathematician, and the book concentrates on one of the most fascinating problems in science: What is time, and how do we understand it? The greatest minds in mathematics, from Newton to Poincaré to Thom, have applied themselves to this problem, and their discoveries have influenced modern civilization to an unsuspected degree.

Ekeland guides the reader through three revolutions in mathematical thinking, from Newton's era to the present. He shows how each new era of mathematics has shaped human ideas about the cosmos and, over time, influenced science, philosophy and ultimately all activities of the mind. Of particular interest is his nonmathematical treatment of catastrophe theory, one of the most controversial and intriguing ideas in current scientific thought.

No mathematical training is required to read and enjoy *Mathematics and the Unexpected*, only an interest in modern science. For the mathematically inclined, technical information is provided in an appendix.

— from the publisher

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UNEXPECTED

IVAR EKELAND

Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988, 146 pages, 5½" x 9", paperback, $8.95

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