

"Kelly Happe's book is the most comprehensive look at the implications in both theory and practice of the new genomics. It demands to be read by physician and academic alike."

—Sander L. Gilman, author of *Obesity: The Biography*

"*The Material Gene* is a provocative, clearly written, and well-informed account of how genetic science reinforces harmful assumptions about race and gender under the banner of 'progress.' This book is necessary reading for rhetoric scholars, scientists, and citizens who are building alternative frameworks for understanding disease and heredity."

—Dana Cloud, author of *Control and Consolation in American Politics and Culture: Rhetorics of Therapy*

"This book demonstrates that the rhetoric of science does its best work when it moves science out of the laboratory and into the political and social world. By putting the genomic body back into its social context, Happe reveals the perilous history between genomics and eugenics, while at the same time, she offers insight into how the promise of genomic research might escape its political unconscious."

—Ronald Walter Greene, author of *Malthusian Worlds: US Leadership and the Governing of the Population Crisis*

In 2000, the National Human Genome Research Institute announced the completion of a "draft" of the human genome, the sequence information of nearly all 3 billion base pairs of DNA. Since then, interest in the hereditary basis of disease has increased considerably. In *The Material Gene*, Kelly E. Happe considers the broad implications of this development by treating "heredity" as both a scientific and political concept. Beginning with the argument that eugenics was an ideological project that recast the problems of industrialization as pathologies of gender, race, and class, the book traces the legacy of this ideology in contemporary practices of genomics.

Delving into the discrete and often obscure epistemologies and discursive practices of genomic scientists, Happe maps the ways in which the hereditary body, one that is also normatively gendered and racialized, is the new site whereby economic injustice, environmental pollution, racism, and sexism are implicitly reinterpreted as pathologies of genes and by extension, the bodies they inhabit. Comparing genomic approaches to medicine and public health with discourses of epidemiology, social movements, and humanistic theories of the body and society, *The Material Gene* reworks our common assumption of what might count as effective, just, and socially transformative notions of health and disease.

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