

Anthropology and the New Genetics

The growth of "new genetics" has dramatically increased our understanding of health, diseases, and the body. Anthropologists argue that these scientific advances have also had far-reaching social and cultural implications, radically changing our self-understanding and our perception of what it means to be human; that we have become "biomedicalized," fragmented and commodified – thus redefining our notions of citizenship, social relations, family, and identity. *Anthropology and the New Genetics* shows how anthropology can contribute to and challenge the ways we have come to understand genetic issues. Exploring a range of issues and case studies in human genetic research, it provides an ethnographic "reality-check," arguing that we must look beyond the "gene-centrism" of genetic codes, family trees, and insular populations, to explore their wider cultural, ethical, and philosophical implications. Merging natural and social issues with the real world of medical science, this book will be welcomed by anyone interested in anthropology, sociology, biology, health, and medicine.

Gísli Pálsson is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Iceland, and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute. He has published over ninety journal articles and twenty books, including *Coastal Economies, Cultural Accounts* (1991), *Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives* (1996), *Beyond Boundaries: Understanding, Translation and Anthropological Discourse* (1995), and *Images of Contemporary Iceland* (1996).

"Gísli Pálsson's book is a welcome dose of first-rate research, reflection, and writing. He patiently and insightfully demonstrates the moral topography of Iceland with resonances far beyond its shores."

PAUL RABINOW *University of California, Berkeley*

"Gísli Pálsson's new book addresses issues relevant to readers far beyond the boundaries of his own discipline. In *Anthropology and the New Genetics* he convincingly illustrates that human genetics is no longer merely a medical specialty but has become part of our every-day lives. It is a must-read for anybody with an interest in how new biomedical knowledge deeply affects understandings of ourselves as members of families, societies and nations."

BARBARA PRINSACK *University of Vienna*

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