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978-0-521-85572-3 - Anthropology and the New Genetics

Gisli Pálsson

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## 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. This book 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 100 scholarly 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).

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GÍSLI PÁLSSON

*University of Iceland*



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*For my mother, Bára Sigurðardóttir*

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Gisli Palsson  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of figures and table</i>	<i>page</i> x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
1 Introduction: “As deep as life itself”	1
2 Birthmarks become landmarks: “Little worlds in themselves”	32
3 Genealogies, relationships, and histories	59
4 Biobanking: medical records and genetic databases	91
5 For whom the cell tolls: bioethics	123
6 Biovalue: appropriating genomes	150
7 Human variation	176
8 Conclusion	207
<i>References</i>	231
<i>Index</i>	255

Figures and table

Figures

1.1	Rosalind Franklin’s Photograph 51 of the B form of DNA	page 7
1.2	“The geography of our genome” ( <i>Nature</i> )	9
2.1	A pedigree with two pairs of sisters affected by osteoarthritis (source: deCODE genetics)	39
2.2	“Birthmark 1, Map A” by Katrín Sigurðardóttir	52
3.1	The lineage of Saint Anne (Gerard David (1455–1523); Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon); © MBA Lyon. Photo Alain Basset	65
3.2	An asthma pedigree with eleven generations (source: deCODE genetics)	72
3.3	Operating the genealogical machine: number of visits (log-ins per day) (source: deCODE genetics)	80
6.1	“Mapping the Human Genome” (New England BioLabs)	156
6.2	Populations included in the Human Genome Diversity Project collection (after Cavalli-Sforza 2005)	159
7.1	An attempt to match language groups with biological taxa based on gene frequency (from Moore 1994)	187

Table

4.1	A Comparison of seven genetic database projects	112
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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-85572-3 - Anthropology and the New Genetics

Gisli Palsson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Gisli Palsson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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[More information](#)

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