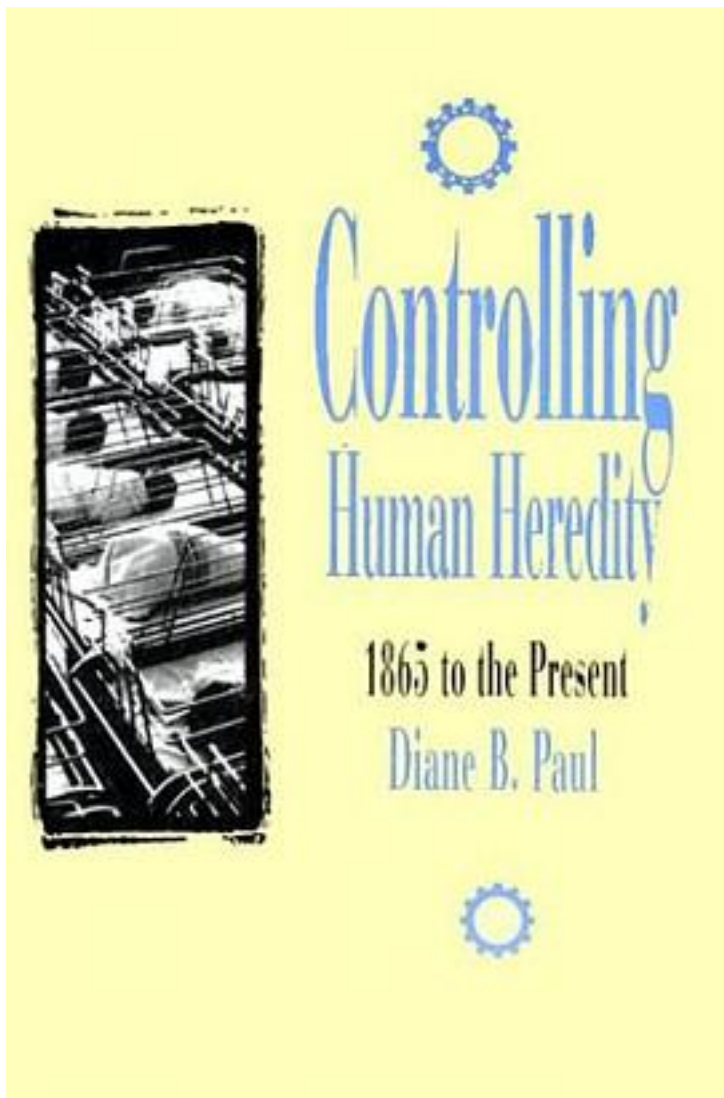


# Controlling Human Heredity



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In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century, it was widely assumed that society ought to foster the breeding of those who possessed favourable traits and discourage the breeding of those who did not. Controlled human breeding, 'eugenics' as it was labelled by Francis Galton, seemed only good common sense. How did eugenics come to exert such powerful and broad appeal? What events shaped its direction? Whose interests did it finally serve? Why did it fall into disrepute? Has it survived in other guises? These are some of the questions that Diane Paul sets out to answer - questions that have acquired a new urgency in light of developments in genetic medicine. The eugenics movement appeared to be dead - associated with race and class prejudice, in particular the crimes of the Third Reich - or was it just sleeping? Has eugenics returned in the guise of medical genetics? In the last decade, historians have come to understand that support for eugenics was diverse and tenacious, with most geneticists remaining enthusiasts through at least the 1930s. This new historiography emphasises eugenics' broad and persistent appeal and its close association with genetics. In "Controlling Human Heredity", Professor Paul aims to bridge the gap between expert and lay understandings of the history of eugenics and thereby enrich the debate on the perplexing contemporary choices in genetics medicine.

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