



Kelly Happe

EPIGENETICS, RACE, AND JUSTICE: RETHINKING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE & REDRESS

Wed. Feb 19 | 11:30am - 12:45pm | Cone 210

FREE | Please RSVP so that we can order food: <https://forms.gle/khCNP4yUbF3x5DjY7>

ABSTRACT: With the growing popularity of the claim that epigenetics can provide biological evidence of racism's intergenerational harms, now is a good time to examine the fundamental assumptions behind such claims. Drawing from theoretical debates about the relationship between history and responsibility, new scholarship on racial management and the Progressive Era, and recent developments in applied epigenetics, this talk will examine how, despite the privileging of environment over heredity, epigenetics reanimates the notion of racial difference and in so doing is unlikely provide compelling claims for redress.

BIO: Kelly Happe is associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies and the Institute for Women's Studies at the University of Georgia. Dr. Happe's scholarship has appeared in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *New Genetics and Society*, *MediaTropes*, *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, and other venues. Her book, *The Material Gene: Gender, Race, and Heredity After the Human Genome Project* was published by NYU Press as part of its "Biopolitics" series and is winner of the 2014 Diamond Anniversary Book Award from the National Communication Association. Her next book project, tentatively titled *Capacitating Capital: Rhetoric, Bodies, and History in the Bioeconomy*, addresses the rise of new materialism and biopolitics in the academy, arguing that by failing to account for the relationship between capital, exploitation, and bodily matter, these disciplinary interventions not only have limited explanatory value, they risk undermining effective articulations of resistance and freedom. In addition to her scholarship, Prof. Happe teaches courses in rhetorical theory, feminist theory, research methods, science studies, and environmental communication.