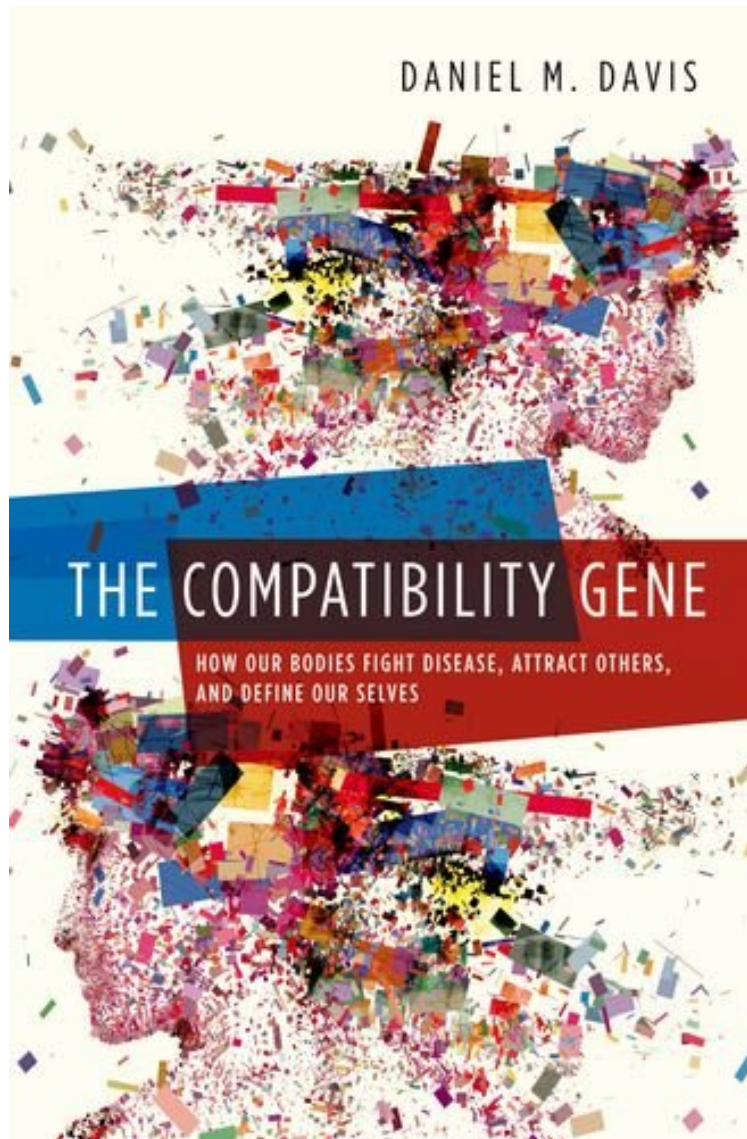


[Free] The Compatibility Gene: How Our Bodies Fight Disease, Attract Others, and Define Our Selves

# The Compatibility Gene: How Our Bodies Fight Disease, Attract Others, and Define Our Selves

*Daniel Davis*

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**Daniel Davis : The Compatibility Gene: How Our Bodies Fight Disease, Attract Others, and Define Our Selves**  
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Compatibility  
Gene: How Our Bodies Fight Disease, Attract Others, and Define Our Selves:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thrilling ride and great storytelling  
By Konrad  
The Compatibility Gene by Daniel Davis is a very interesting and skillfully written book. One can feel the authors passion for immunology, as well as science in general. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I am an immunologist myself, so it was quite a thrilling read. One person had criticized the book for its biographical feel, but I think that is what makes the book really stand out. It is fascinating to see the process, the motivation, and the personalities of people responsible for many essential discoveries in medical sciences. You may read about HLA molecules in text books, Wikipedia, or multiple websites, but those are dry facts. Dr. Davis gave all those discoveries and stories a human side. Biological research is not like any other work. The excessively high rate of failure, constant trials and errors, technical and intellectual challenges make it one of the most taxing and demanding jobs. I think the author perfectly captured and described the human struggle in search for answers and understanding how the immune system functions. It is a fascinating book about scientific discoveries that, in a very reader-friendly fashion, explains very complex and critical issues in immunology. It is a great read. I am looking forward to the next book by Daniel Davis.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Science embedded in personal stories  
By Fred Schreiber  
Immunology is fiendishly complex. Davis has made that complexity accessible by telling stories about the scientists' lives and their struggles to explain the immune system. The facts are embedded in the stories. If you have no background, you will still have to work at it a bit. But you will be well rewarded by learning something about how our immune system works and how science really works. It is an insider's tale. You will learn about the insane hours and unreasonable persistence required to produce new scientific insight. You will learn some immunology. I want to emphasize the word some. This is not an immunology textbook. It is a story of scientific discovery in the discipline of immunology. Davis warns in the introduction that he has left out major parts of immunology in order to make a coherent and more readable book. I think he succeeds admirably. I finished the book in three days, fitting the reading around my other duties. I didn't want to put the book down. It is also obvious from the introduction and text that Davis took the time to interview as many of the immunology researchers as possible. So his stories have a lot of telling details. It really adds to the book. If you read about Davis in this page, you might think he would be a stiff, brilliant science geek as a physicist turned immunologist. He is not. He is obviously concerned with the feelings and humanity of the people he talked to. It comes through in his story telling. I have read a lot of popular science on everything from biology to cosmogony and have found a wide range of writing skills among the authors. One of my beefs about some books is that some authors seem to ramble off topic or just get unnecessarily wordy. Davis does not write that way. He clearly had two goals. One was to write about the process of science and the second was to tell how our understanding of immunology has developed over a half century. He does both with exceptional clarity and his fascinating stories. And he does not stray off topic. I look forward to more books by Davis as he has become one of my favorite science authors.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Simple and informative  
By Edward D and Family  
Im a doctor, and wanted to read about HLA genes and new research/information regarding disorders that are turning out to be hereditary. There was a lot of easy reading information on the history of how we now know what we know, and that in itself was interesting to say the least. Seems we were in the dark ages only some 60 years ago. There's also a lot of easy-explanation regarding why a lot of pregnancies fail (miscarriages...), and how tumors evade our immunity. Summary: its easy enough for high school students to grasp, and remains to be informative even for those in this field itself.

This is the story of a few human genes and how we discovered what these genes do. We each have around 25,000 genes, but the genes in this story are those that vary the most from person to person. These genes--called compatibility genes--are, in effect, a molecular signature that distinguishes each of us as individuals. Davis tells the remarkable story of the discovery of compatibility genes, and how decades of patient scientific inquiry, punctuated with individual strokes of genius, have unraveled their workings. Davis reveals how our compatibility genes fight disease, and how this fight varies in all of us and is unique. The version of these genes that we have inherited determines the extent to which we are susceptible or resistant to a vast range of different illnesses. What is particularly fascinating is that these same genes influence the wiring of our brains, the lovers we choose, and successful pregnancies. Why this would be so is explored by Davis with provocative new research that uncovers the connections between fighting disease, choosing mates, and having healthy babies. By bringing together evidence from diverse fields of biology, this book argues that our compatibility genes are central to how we live and when we die, and that a shocking amount of what we do and who we are is determined by how we have evolved to survive disease. Science has never been more elusive or tantalizing than in revealing the nature of ourselves--and unlocking the secrets of our compatibility genes will be central to 21st-century medicine.

"An elegantly written, unexpectedly gripping account of how scientists painstakingly unraveled the way in which a small group of genes ... crucially influence, and unexpectedly interconnect, various aspects of our lives ... Lab work has rarely been made to seem more heroic." -Bill Bryson, Guardian Books of the Year 2013 "Dr Davis's readable and informative book takes the reader into unexpectedly interesting corners of both the immune system and the lives of immunologists. It is packed with an insider's knowledge -- not just of the field, but of where its bodies are buried." -

New York Times "... a fascinating, expertly told story" -New Statesman "Davis provides a well-written and easy-to-read account of the sometimes complicated biology behind the crucial genes that affect our lives so profoundly." -New Scientist "Davis weaves a warm biographical thread through his tale of scientific discovery, revealing the drive and passion of those in the vanguard of research ... unusual results, astonishing implications and ethical dilemmas." -Times of London "Davis makes the twists and turns all count." -Guardian "Wonderful pen-portraits of the many scientists involved in this fast-moving field ... 5 out of 5 stars." -BBC Science Magazine FOCUS "Davis gets a gold star ... for putting over an arcane subject with such infectious enthusiasm." --Nature "...this nonfiction work is a book of the methods, practice, and serendipity of science in which the reader is given a comprehensive yet entertaining glimpse into the lives of scientists whose research still affects us today. ... The stories and insights recounted in the book are an enlightening account of the rewards received as well as the sacrifices needed to be a successful researcher in the sciences..." --PsychCritiques "An elegantly written, unexpectedly gripping account of how scientists painstakingly unraveled the way in which a small group of genes ... crucially influence, and unexpectedly interconnect, various aspects of our lives ... Lab work has rarely been made to seem more heroic." -Bill Bryson, Guardian Books of the Year 2013 "Dr Davis's readable and informative book takes the reader into unexpectedly interesting corners of both the immune system and the lives of immunologists. It is packed with an insider's knowledge -- not just of the field, but of where its bodies are buried." -New York Times "... a fascinating, expertly told story" -New Statesman "Davis provides a well-written and easy-to-read account of the sometimes complicated biology behind the crucial genes that affect our lives so profoundly." -New Scientist "Davis weaves a warm biographical thread through his tale of scientific discovery, revealing the drive and passion of those in the vanguard of research ... unusual results, astonishing implications and ethical dilemmas." -Times of London "Davis makes the twists and turns all count." -Guardian "Wonderful pen-portraits of the many scientists involved in this fast-moving field ... 5 out of 5 stars." -BBC Science Magazine FOCUS "Davis gets a gold star ... for putting over an arcane subject with such infectious enthusiasm." --Nature "...this nonfiction work is a book of the methods, practice, and serendipity of science in which the reader is given a comprehensive yet entertaining glimpse into the lives of scientists whose research still affects us today. ... The stories and insights recounted in the book are an enlightening account of the rewards received as well as the sacrifices needed to be a successful researcher in the sciences..." --PsychCritiques "The book is written in a chatty informal style that is easier to follow than many others." --The Quarterly of Biology "The book is skillfully written and easy to read. Dr. Davis has used his immunology expertise to produce a fine informative book that does not shortchange the elegant and complicated science, but illustrates it with clarity and insight." --Oncology Times

Mentioned in Bill Bryson's *The Road to Little Dribbling: More Notes from a Small Island*

About the Author Daniel M. Davis, PhD, is a distinguished immunologist whose work has established new concepts on how immune cells communicate with each other, how immune cells recognize disease, and how viruses spread between cells. He is currently Professor of Immunology at the University of Manchester, UK, where he is the Director of Research at the Manchester Collaborative Center for Inflammation Research. Davis pioneered the use of microscopy to help visualize key molecular components of immune responses. His work helped establish a new concept of how immune cells communicate with each other and how they recognize disease. He has published over 100 academic papers, including papers in *Nature* and *Science*, collectively cited over 6,000 times. He was the recipient of a Lister Prize in 2005, a Wolfson Royal Society Merit Award in 2008, and became a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 2011.