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Autore	Evans Bonnie
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Sommario/riassunto	This electronic version has been made available under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) open access license. This book is available as an open access ebook under a CC-BY-NC-ND licence. What is autism and where has it come from? Increased diagnostic rates, the rise of the 'neurodiversity' movement, and growing autism journalism, have recently fuelled autism's fame and controversy. The metamorphosis of autism is the first book to explain our current fascination with autism by linking it to a longer history of childhood development. Drawing from a staggering array of primary sources, Bonnie Evans traces autism back to its origins in the early twentieth century and explains why the idea of autism has always been controversial and why it experienced a 'metamorphosis' in the 1960s and 1970s. Evans takes the reader on a journey of discovery from the ill-managed wards of 'mental deficiency' hospitals, to high-powered debates in the houses of parliament, and beyond. The book will appeal to a wide market of scholars and others interested in autism.