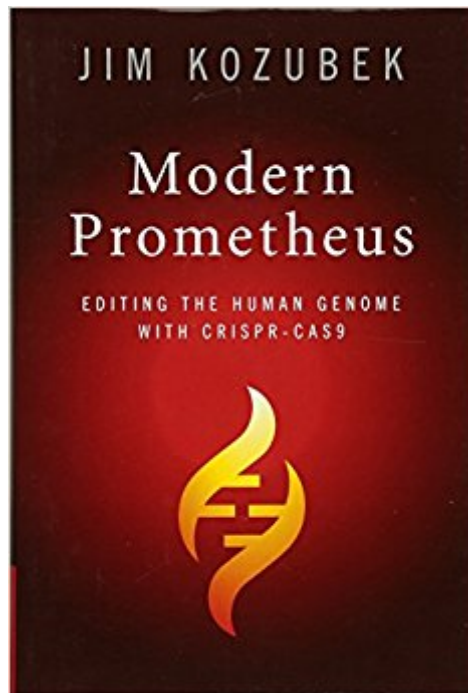




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Modern Prometheus: Editing The Human Genome With Crispr-Cas9



Synopsis

Would you change your genes if you could? As we confront the 'industrial revolution of the genome', the recent discoveries of Crispr-Cas9 technologies are offering, for the first time, cheap and effective methods for editing the human genome. This opens up startling new opportunities as well as significant ethical uncertainty. Tracing events across a fifty-year period, from the first gene splicing techniques to the present day, this is the story of gene editing - the science, the impact and the potential. Kozubek weaves together the fascinating stories of many of the scientists involved in the development of gene editing technology. Along the way, he demystifies how the technology really works and provides vivid and thought-provoking reflections on the continuing ethical debate. Ultimately, Kozubek places the debate in its historical and scientific context to consider both what drives scientific discovery and the implications of the 'commodification' of life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Usefully pushes the discussion beyond obvious designer-baby concerns to the technique's limitations, and its broader implications for agriculture and the commercialization of science." (Nature) "Kozubek ... gives the general reader a solid introduction to the current state of affairs, as seen by its creators and those who are using it in research and commerce.' George J. Annas, Science'... as eye-witness to a revolution in reading and writing our own genomes, [Kozubek] has done a truly remarkable job of getting the nuances right, while dodging through the minefields between enthusiasm and easy dismissal. Provides a rich tapestry of insights into the scientific

discovery, technology development and applications to many agricultural, environmental and medical problems which should matter deeply to all readers.' George Church, Harvard University'Over the last 60 years the vast enterprise of experimental biology has taken the world from complete ignorance of how complex organisms are created to a very detailed knowledge of the processes involved. Now we are entering a world in which we can manipulate these processes, even modifying the heredity of our species and all others. James Kozubek tells the story of how we came to this knowledge in a carefully woven fabric of presentation, starting with the most recent events and then delving back into the history. He focuses on the remarkable personalities involved and the controversies that have complicated the discovery process. It is a wonderful, rewarding and easily read book.' David Baltimore, California Institute of Technology

Would you change your genes if you could? Crispr-Cas9 technologies are now offering cheap and effective methods for editing the human genome. Telling the interwoven stories of the scientists involved, Kozubek traces events across a fifty-year period, demystifying how Crispr works and reflecting on the continuing ethical dilemmas it brings.

I enjoyed this book because it is an up-to-date look at genetic modification. It explains all the major methods including zinc finger technology, TALENS and CRISPR-Cas9. However, a prior knowledge of biology is required to understand a lot of what author Jim Kozubek discusses. His discussions are comprehensive and he gets a lot of his materials through interviews. This is very interesting but some of the quotes are so long I forgot who he was interviewing. Sometimes he goes into too much detail and I would see the trees, not the forest. Kozubek also takes several detours that detract from the book. His discussion of Chomsky was incomprehensible and his discussion of Mary Shelley was interesting but largely irrelevant. His dives into philosophy were equally unappealing. However his discussions of the potential for gene editing and the ethical and legal implications were very good. Overall, despite the faults, I can recommend this book to anyone with a background in biology who wants to learn more about the subject. Disclosure: I received this book free via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Very up to date account and analysis

Difficult, at times. A solid effort into some complicated terrain.

save your money and purchase 'The Gene,' by Siddhartha Mukherjee. Modern Prometheus is a schizophrenic hodgepodge of conversations between scientists and unessential tidbits. I'll paraphrase something he said in the first chapter: 'I tried to tie this book into the legend of Prometheus, that didn't work, but i wrote the book anyway.'

Pretension + ADHD = a labyrinthine narrative.

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