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Review

"A solid introduction to the current state of affairs." (Science) "A truly remarkable job of getting the nuances right, while dodging through the minefields between enthusiasm and easy dismissal." (George Church, Harvard)"A wonderful, rewarding and easily read book." (David Baltimore, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine)"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)

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About the Author

James Kozubek is a staff scientist at the Brigham and Women's Hospital with affiliation to the Broad Institute of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Kozubek is also an established journalist whose science writing has appeared in The Boston Globe, The Atlantic and Scientific American, amongst others.

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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.

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A comprehensive, up-to-date look at genetic modification

By Steve G

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.

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