



The Gene: An Intimate History

Siddhartha Mukherjee

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From the Pulitzer Prize-winning, bestselling author of *The Emperor of All Maladies*—a magnificent history of the gene and a response to the defining question of the future: What becomes of being human when we learn to “read” and “write” our own genetic information?

The extraordinary Siddhartha Mukherjee has written a biography of the gene as deft, brilliant, and illuminating as his extraordinarily successful biography of cancer. Weaving science, social history, and personal narrative to tell us the story of one of the most important conceptual breakthroughs of modern times, Mukherjee animates the quest to understand human heredity and its surprising influence on our lives, personalities, identities, fates, and choices.

Throughout the narrative, the story of Mukherjee’s own family—with its tragic and bewildering history of mental illness—cuts like a bright, red line, reminding us of the many questions that hang over our ability to translate the science of genetics from the laboratory to the real world. In superb prose and with an instinct for the dramatic scene, he describes the centuries of research and experimentation—from Aristotle and Pythagoras to Mendel and Darwin, from Boveri and Morgan to Crick, Watson and Franklin, all the way through the revolutionary twenty-first century innovators who mapped the human genome.

As *The New Yorker* said of *The Emperor of All Maladies*, “It’s hard to think of many books for a general audience that have rendered any area of modern science and technology with such intelligence, accessibility, and compassion...An extraordinary achievement.” Riveting, revelatory, and magisterial history of a scientific idea coming to life, and an essential preparation for the moral complexity introduced by our ability to create or “write” the human genome, *The Gene* is a must-read for everyone concerned about the definition and future of humanity. This is the most crucial science of our time, intimately explained by a master.

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