

“yes” and when to say “no”—whether it be to new opportunities, assignments, or responsibilities. More importantly, balance is about choosing how to spend your time and energy. Poole inspires her readers to envision a balanced life and encourages their commitment to creating it by offering basic task management tips and concepts. She also reminds her readers that their dreams, goals, and aspirations can all fit into their balanced lives and not be tossed aside.

The various chapters focus on working from home, balancing family and other commitments, work emergency preparedness, and coping with being under- and overworked. Vignettes from other experienced freelancers provide readers with invaluable tips of the trade and words of wisdom to help navigate the world of freelancing. This informative book is intended for all freelancers. Beginning freelancers can learn practical approaches to crafting a work-life balance, while seasoned freelancers can be subtly reminded to actively practice these approaches.

The idea of work-life balance is subjective and based on our personal values, ideals, and circumstances. Pursuing a sustainable work-life equilibrium is crucial to an individual's personal and professional success, health, happiness, and productivity. Although there is no set formula for obtaining a balanced life, it is achievable. It is a constantly evolving journey, not a destination. We must treasure and embrace the journey.

Reviewer: Tara Ann Cartwright, PhD

Tara Ann is a medical writer and editor in Research Triangle Park, NC.

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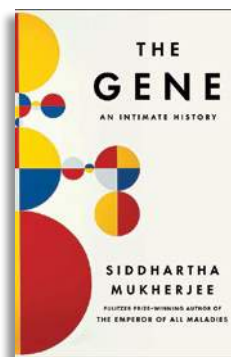
The Gene: An Intimate History

Siddhartha Mukherjee, MD

New York, NY: Scribner, 2016, Paperback, 495 pages, \$20.005

Siddhartha Mukherjee, MD, begins his third book, *The Gene: An Intimate History*, as personally as possible, with his own family's history of debilitating mental illnesses. The author's weighty relationship to the material builds important trust with wide audiences, each carrying varying relationships with their own genetic inheritance.

The Gene impressively covers the gene's journey from archaic abstraction to malleable experimental material in 2015. Sticking to a journalistic style evoking human interest, Dr Mukherjee wraps the seminal thought and



laboratory experiments of an introductory genetics textbook around the lives and cultural contexts of their authors.

As audience understanding builds so does the number of elements in flow diagrams spaced throughout the book. The final diagram on page 410 links genes to RNAs, proteins, organisms, and environments through regulatory and influencing relationships. This accessibly presented scientific knowledge equips the reader to reflect on social, technological, and ethical questions continually presented by the text explicitly and implicitly:

- Can an intelligent machine ever decipher its own instruction manual?
- Is genetic memory carried in a community that has survived trauma or lived in an altered environment?
- How should you tell your child about the outcomes of a genetic test for a life-ending or dramatically life-altering illness?
- How do we talk about the coming world in which editing human DNA is possible within the context of a global legacy of violent eugenics?

Mukherjee uses a number of epithets before every section and before every chapter of the book. Although unusual, this tonally prepares the reader for the multitude of atmospheres reflected in the small sample of questions above.

As might be expected of a professor skilled at sparking conversation, Mukherjee ends the last chapter before the epilogue with a list of items reminiscent of the learning objectives of a lecture. He modestly calls it a possible opening to a manifesto for the post-genomic world.

As I research and write about science, health, and genomic literacy, I am challenged by addressing the distrust of medical science built on legacies of violence. Dr Mukherjee sustains audience trust by discussing his family periodically alongside passionate patients who became researchers and study subjects. Importantly, he discusses disability as a mismatch between function and environment and speaks respectfully about the biology behind homosexual and transgender lived experiences. Absolutely anyone can walk away from this book and have a seat at the table where we talk about who we are and where we want genomic technology to take us.

Reviewer: Elizabeth Schiavoni

Elizabeth Schiavoni, MS, is a Genetics, Genomics, and Bioinformatics graduate of the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and a Global Health graduate of Georgetown University. She is a freelance writer and editor in Buffalo, NY.

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