



The Lottery of Life

Philippe Frossard

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Molecular biology - genetics - is one of the fastest-moving fields of modern science, and one which has wide-ranging implications. The author of this book argues that our genetic make-up is at present no more than a lottery. Our susceptibility to disease, potential lifespan and potential for a healthy life are all to a great extent dictated by the genes we inherit, but Dr Frossard argues that, armed with the knowledge which has been gained from genetic science, much can be done to avoid life-threatening conditions; that the future of medicine is in prevention and that it is not impossible that a cure for cancer, or the eradication of coronary heart-disease, will be achieved within the next few years. The conquering of disease is not simply a humanitarian quest. Scientists and the major drug companies are racing to discover new and more effective treatments and the financial rewards are huge. This financial impetus puts additional pressure on the scientists and raises in turn complex ethical questions. Should, for example, the drug industry really profit from the suffering caused by disease? From the study of DNA in the 1950s to the first test-tube baby, from the study of inherited diseases to new and effective treatments for them, and the ethical questions raised, this book provides an account of current developments in this new science. The author has researched in the field of genetic science for over ten years, both in American and European universities, and in the private sector in America.

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