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Next



Synopsis

Welcome to our genetic world. Fast, furious, and out of control. This is not the world of the future—it's the world right now.

Book Information

Mass Market Paperback: 560 pages

Publisher: Harper; Reprint edition (November 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060873167

ISBN-13: 978-0060873165

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 1.3 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (646 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I have very mixed feelings about "Next" and I will try to describe them accurately here, although there are hundreds of reviews already and mine will not add much to the discussion probably - but maybe some points will be reinforced by my adding to the subject. The novel's central theme is genetic manipulations and the ethical issues surrounding them. There are many subplots, all revolving around the famous philanthropist, Jack Watson (is the name a pure coincidence?), who advocates scientific progress and donates money to biotech companies. The plethora of characters includes bounty hunters, lawyers, drug addicts, physicians, teachers, secretaries, security guards, and, of course, scientists of all levels, both from academia and biotech (the difference between the two becoming less and less clear). The animal-human hybrids are made in secret; the genes are patented, the genetic screens are used to the advantage of insurance companies and in numerous trials as a tool to extort money; the scientists are depicted as vicious breed. The only two families who seem honest are the Burnets, who because of Frank Burnet's precious cancer cell line become involved in a massive scheme, and the Kendalls, who decide to adopt Henry Kendalls genetic son Dave, a hybrid between human and chimpanzee. The novel is fast-paced and the characters flick like in a kaleidoscope, some being introduced only for the sake of presenting another problem

connected with biotechnology (for example, the whole story of the MD who donated sperm as a resident is very loosely connected to the main plot, only by the implied involvement of Watson). Initially, I could not stand this book, but after about 200 pages I reflected and realized several things:1.

Just how far corporations, institutes or even individuals should be allowed to go when it comes to holding patents? Where should the line be drawn when it comes to patents, copy writes, intellectual property? What if these patents and the like involve the very building blocks of all life as we know it, the very genome? While we're at it, how far should various companies, corporations and even research institutes be allowed to go when it comes to mixing genomes. When does playing god go too far? These are just a few of the questions that are not only raised, but speculated upon and answered in Michael Crichton's latest thriller, *Next*. The novel delves into the world of genetic engineering, transgenics, chimera's patents on genes and everything that is involved. The human side, how people react and are affected by all these factors. I'll come out and state it. Because of various genetic defects that are prevalent in my bloodline, I've always had a keen interest in biogenetics and the entire field. Not enough to go into it as a career, but still, more than a passing interest. This novel was right up my alley. It took me three days to read it, and it wasn't a small book by any stretch of the imagination, it was a massive five hundred pages long. People who pick up the book and read it, I should warn you right now, without giving away any spoilers, that it can be quite confusing. There is a massive cast of characters. Each character has a role to play in the novel, and at first, all these different roles, stories if you will, don't seem to be connected.

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