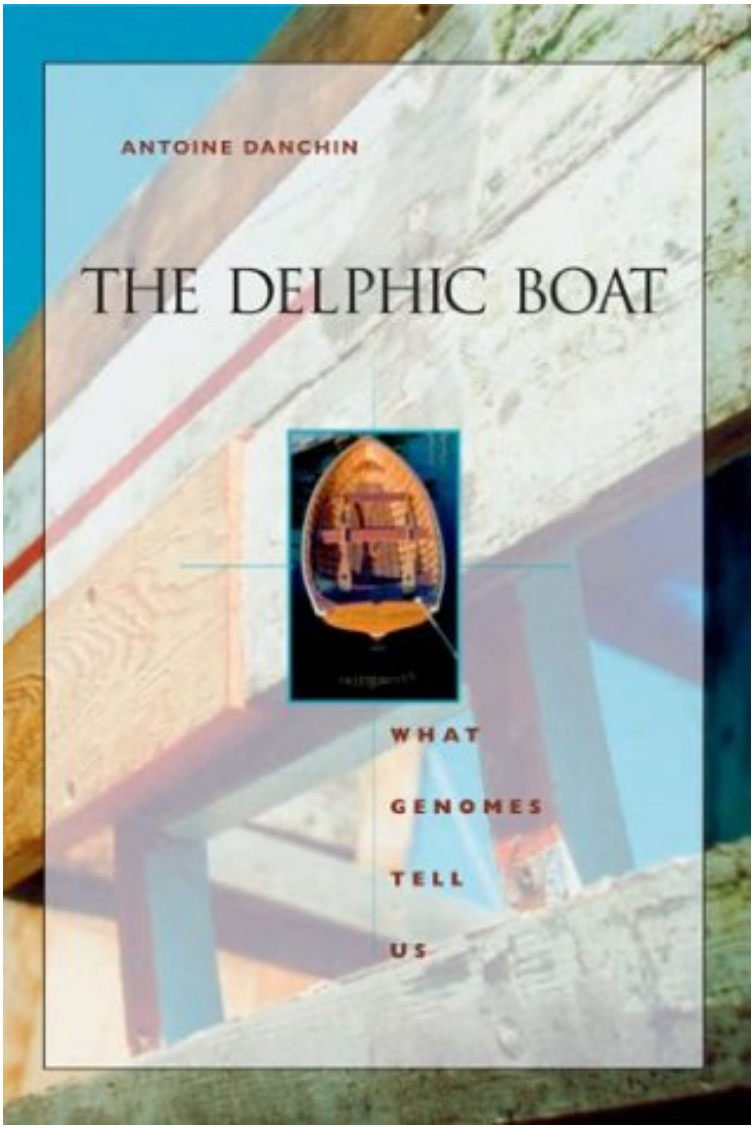
The Delphic Boat: What Genomes Tell Us

Antoine Danchin
*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



#2594232 in Books Harvard University Press 2003-02-28 2003-03-30Original language:FrenchPDF # 1 9.52 x 1.25 x 6.38l, 1.53 #File Name: 0674009304380 pages | File size: 25.Mb

Antoine Danchin : The Delphic Boat: What Genomes Tell Us before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Delphic Boat: What Genomes Tell Us:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great Book on Genetics!!By J. TrieglaffEver since I bought this book, I thought it was very helpful in understanding genetics. I recommend it to anyone interested in understanding genetics. But I will warn you, it's not an easy read.

By the end of 2001, almost 500 genome programs were completed or under way. Drawing upon what researchers worldwide are learning from the gene sequences of bacteria, plants, fungi, fruit flies, worms, and humans, Danchin shows us how genomes are far more than mere collections of genes.

From Publishers WeeklyDanchin, professor and department head at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, reveals that scientific genome sequencing is only a first step in identifying the myriad genes that make up our 23 pairs of chromosomes. The author draws upon many different fields, from biology and genetics to information theory and literary studies, in his rich and multifaceted discussion of what scientists mean when they talk about a "genome." The book explores how researchers identify the roles of genes and the proteins they produce, and how understanding genomes leads us to a reconsideration of the very idea of life. Danchin explains why the smallest organisms receive so much attention from scientists-from how a simple yeast organism can explain much about our own genetic makeup to how a bacterium widely used in food preparation could suddenly mutate into a pathogenic version. The author points out that deciphering the genetic code is driven by political and economic considerations as much as by scientific ones, and that the issue of patenting genetic sequences will surely reach the Supreme Court, if not international courts. The book is fairly technical but well written for the nonspecialist, aided by Quayle's masterful translation. 1 halftone and 4 line drawings. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalThis book by Danchin, head of the Unit of Genetics of Bacterial Genomes at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and director of the HKU-Pasteur Research Center in Hong Kong, is a translation of his 1998 French work, La barque de Delphes. The title refers to a question posed to the oracle at Delphi asking whether a boat whose planks have all been replaced over time is still the same boat. This illustrates that relationships between things define the whole, just as the relationship between our genes and cells defines who we are, not the individual genes as discovered and mapped in the Human Genome Project (HGP). Danchin makes many interesting points about the history of genome sequencing, especially the international contributions to various genome-sequencing projects. A long chapter covers computers in genome sequencing and how they help scientists learn about the products of the genes-in silico analysis is the phrase coined by the author. Danchin also gives an overview of science philosophy and how various experimental paradigms can be used to study the interactions among DNA, RNA, cells, and the final product-our bodies. Recommended for university collections, especially in science history and philosophy.Margaret Henderson, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Lib. Archives, NY Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistAre the biologists now sequencing the genomes for humans and other species opening a bright new epoch in medical technology? Or are they, as some have warned, actually delivering us into the hands of eugenic manipulators? Thanks to the efforts of translator Quayle, English-speaking readers can now assess such urgent questions with the help of pioneering French researcher Danchin. In this landmark 1998 study, Danchin dispels the widespread misconception that scientists have laid hold of the keys to genetic power merely by transcribing the sequence of genes within the genome. His lucid analysis demonstrates that the genetic code functions not with the mechanical predictability of Newtonian physics but rather with the elusive suggestiveness of foreign metaphors. Transcription of the genetic components of these metaphors still leaves genome explorers with the daunting tasks of annotating and interpreting them, tasks in which they will succeed only if they--like the ancient Oracle at Delphi--surrender the illusion of physical solidity and trace the hidden symbolic meanings in chromosomes. Of course, actually unraveling these meanings requires rare professional skills. Yet Danchin conducts intelligent amateurs surprisingly far into the central issues. This timely book offers hope that the rhetoric and hype of the antagonists fighting over the genome agenda will not drown out rational dialogue. Bryce ChristensenCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved