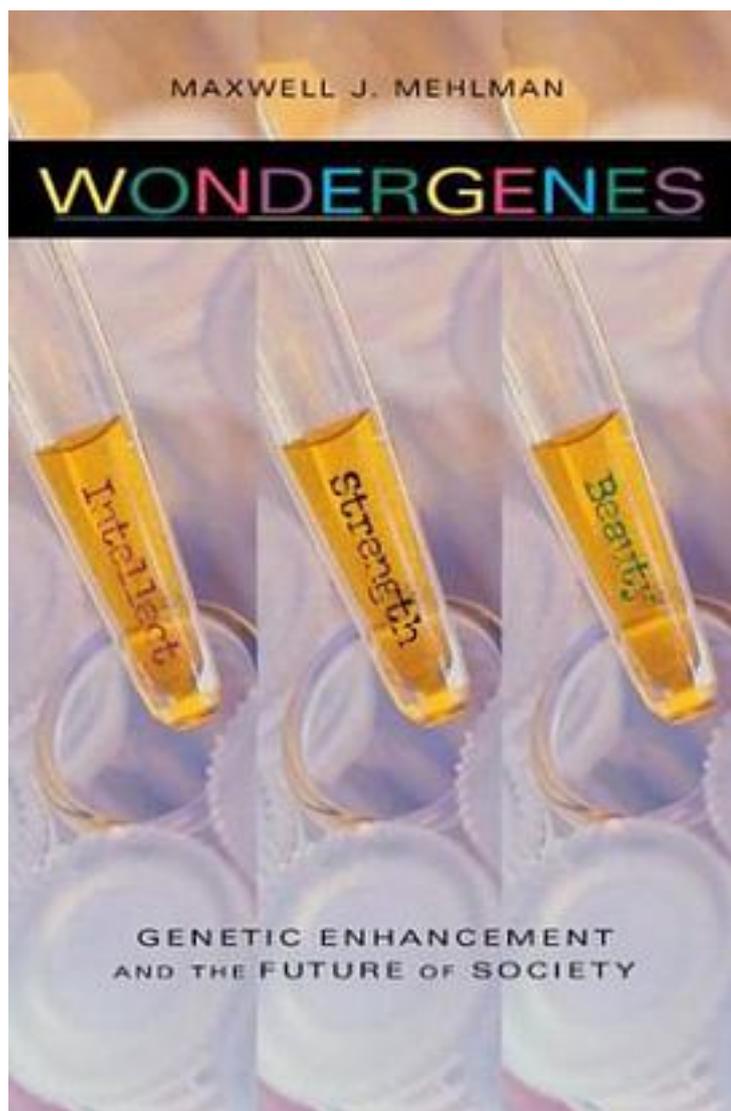


Wondergenes



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Wondergenes not only imagines a future world in which genetic enhancement is the norm, but asserts that this future has already begun. Genetically engineered substances are already in use by athletes, in vitro fertilization already provides the primitive means by which parents can 'select' an embryo, and the ability to create new forms of genetically engineered human beings is not far off. What happens when gene therapy becomes gene enhancement? Who will benefit and who might be left behind? What are the costs to our values and beliefs, and to the future of our society? To answer these questions, Maxwell J. Mehlman provides an overview of the scientific advances that have led to the present state of genetic enhancement, and explains how these advances will be used in the future to redefine what we think is a normal human being. Mehlman explores the ethical dilemmas already facing researchers and medical practitioners, and the dilemmas we will all be expected to face. He outlines the many potential uses of genetic enhancement, from improved mental capacities to specialized physical characteristics, and addresses the dangers inherent in this technology. He is particularly concerned with ways to prevent the emergence of a 'genobility' made up of those able to afford increasingly expensive enhancement. Wondergenes is a serious, but accessible introduction to the social and personal implications of genetic engineering. Mehlman weighs the social and economic costs of the many proposals to regulate or limit genetic engineering, and provides six concrete policy recommendations, from professional licensing to a ban on germ-line enhancement, that propose to make the future of genetic enhancement more equitable and safe.

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