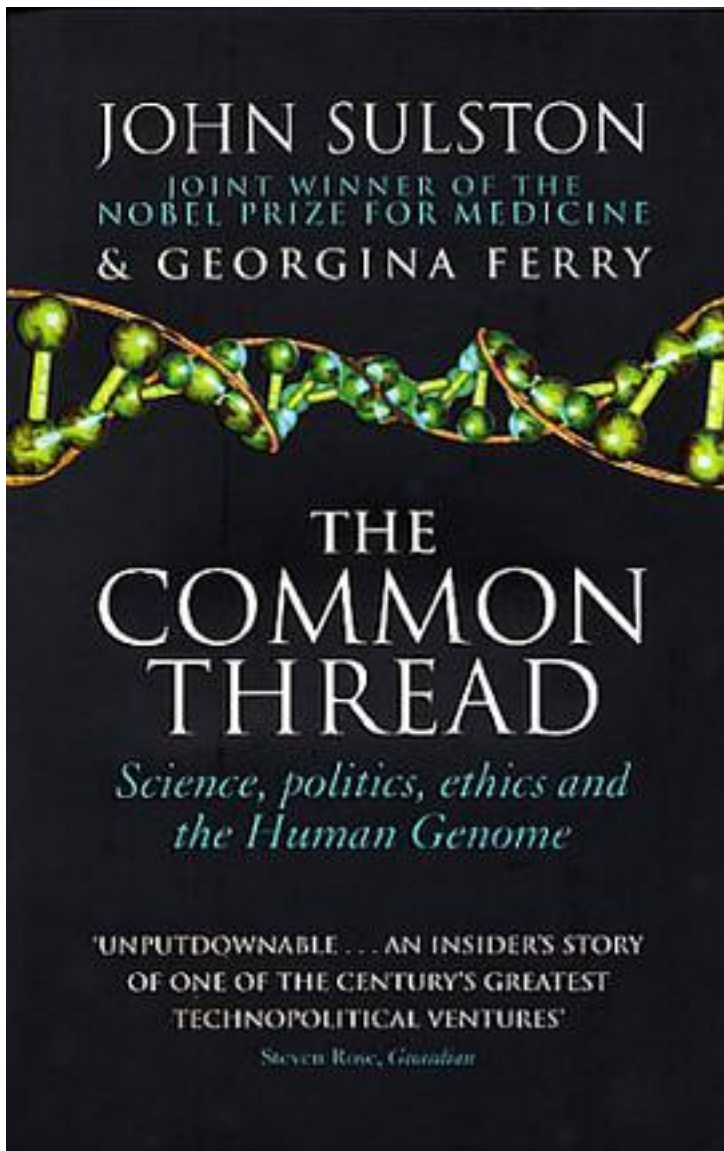


The Common Thread



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著者:Sulston, John/ Ferry, Georgina

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The world was agog when scientists made the astounding announcement that they had successfully sequenced the human genome. Few contributed so directly to this feat as John Sulston. This is his personal account of one of the largest international scientific operations ever undertaken. It was a momentous occasion when British scientist, John Sulston embarked on the greatest scientific endeavor of our times: the sequencing of the Human Genome. In "The Common Thread", Sulston takes us behind the scenes for an in-depth look at the controversial story behind the headlines. The accomplishments and the setbacks - along with the politics, personalities, and ethics - that shaped the research are frankly explored by a central figure key to the project. From the beginning, Sulston fervently proclaimed his belief in the free and open exchange of the scientific information that would emerge from the project. Guided by these principles, The Human Genome Project was structured so that all the findings were public, encouraging an unparalleled international collaboration among scientists and researchers. Then, in May 1998, Craig Venter announced that he was quitting the Human Genome Project - with plans to head up a commercial venture launched to bring out the complete sequence three years hence, but marketed in a proprietary database. Venter's intentions, clearly anathema to Sulston and the global network of scientists working on the Project, marked the beginning of a dramatic struggle to keep the human genome in the public domain. More than the story of human health versus corporate wealth, this is an exploration of the very nature of a scientific quest for discovery. Infused with Sulston's own enthusiasm and excitement, the tale unfolds to reveal the scientists who painstakingly turn the key that will unlock the riddle of the human genome. We are privy to the joy and exuberance of success as well as the stark disappointments posed by inevitable failures. It is truly a wild and wonderful ride. "The Common Thread" is at once a compelling history and an impassioned call for ethical responsibility in scientific research. As the boundaries between science and big business increasingly blur, and researchers race to patent medical discoveries, the international community needs to find a common protocol for the protection of the wider human interest. This extraordinary enterprise is a glimpse of our shared human heritage, offering hope for future research and a fresh outlook on our understanding of ourselves.

作者介绍:

作者：约翰·苏尔斯顿（John Sulston）；乔治娜·费里（Georgina Ferry）
译者：杨焕明；刘斌

约翰·苏尔斯顿（John Sulston）

英国皇家学院院士，2002年诺贝尔生理学或医学奖得主。1963年获英国剑桥大学学士学位，1966年获得剑桥大学博士学位。1992年至2000年任英国剑桥桑格中心主任，其间他领导人类基因组计划国际性团队的英国分支。1990年发表线虫基因图谱，对于推进人类基因组跨国性工程，具开创性意义。

乔治娜·费里（Georgina Ferry）

科学作家、英国广播公司电台主播，著有《为世界而生：霍奇金传》。

杨焕明

中国科学院院士，深圳华大基因研究院理事长，香港中文大学荣誉教授，中国城市科学研究会副理事长，深圳市科学技术协会副主席。2007年当选为中国科学院院士，同时为印度国家科学院、德国国家科学院、美国科学院、丹麦皇家科学院等的院士。编著、翻译多部基因组学、医学遗传学领域的学术专著。

刘 斌

中国科学院“百人计划”研究员，博士生导师。有幸参与了人类基因组计划，2004年，其主持的国际鸡基因组多态性研究计划的研究成果被《自然》杂志作为封面文章刊载，成为世界上首批发布的畜禽类基因组序列图谱。目前他从事的精准基因组学、精准医学、精准健康方面的研究将继续为生命科学的发展发挥积极作用。

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