Genetically Modified Language
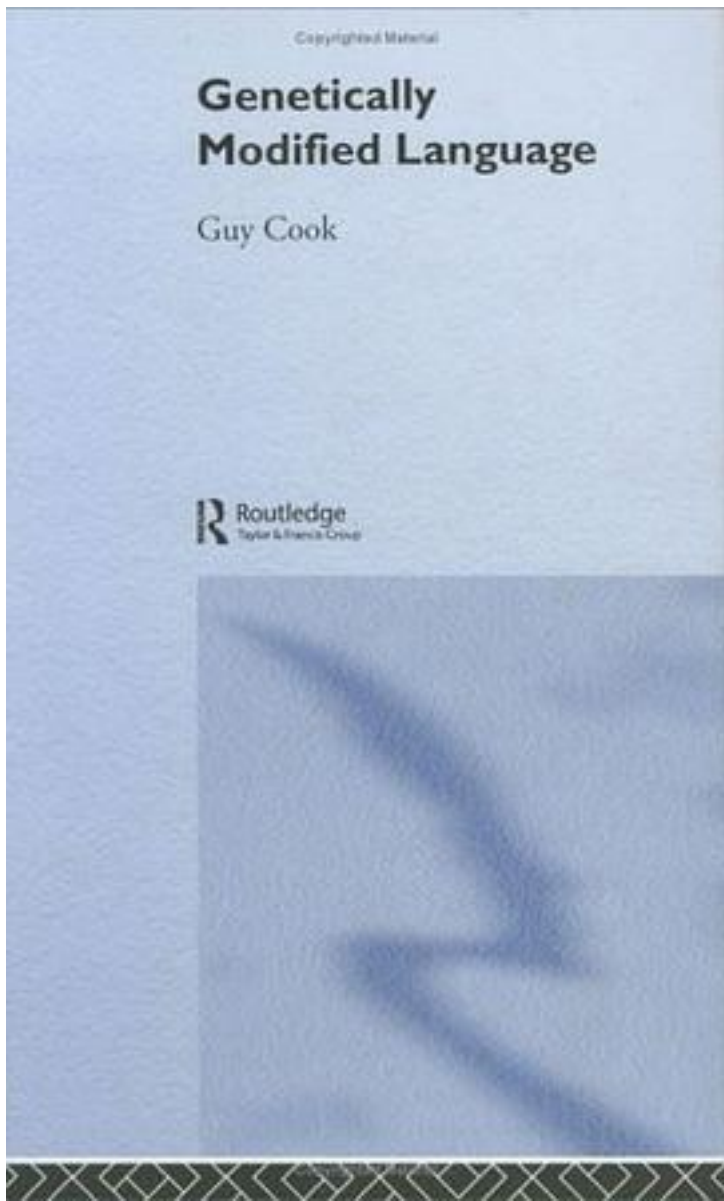

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The GM debate is as much a war of words as of facts. Food and farming are being changed forever - yet whether for good or bad is the subject of an increasingly bitter argument. Those promoting GM have mounted an intense campaign, characterising their opponents as terrorists and Luddites, governed by ignorance, irrationality and hysteria. Yet public opinion remains unconvinced and antagonistic. As the argument intensifies and the voices on all sides get louder, Genetically Modified Language cuts through the confusion and controversy to the issues and ideology at the heart of the disagreement . Guy Cook subjects the language of the case for GM to a careful and detailed examination. He looks in turn at the persuasive strategies used by politicians, scientists, the media, biotechnology corporations, and supermarkets, showing how their arguments mix together scientific, commercial, ethical and political criteria, and are seldom as factual and straightforward as they claim. Through analyses of recurrent words and phrases, and of the constant comparisons made with other international issues, he shows how the GM debate has become inseparable from the wider political conflicts of our time. In a final chapter he turns to public reactions to all of the arguments. Throughout this analysis, the campaign for GM is seen as exemplifying disturbing trends in the contemporary use of language for public information. Language which purports to seek clarity and neutrality, and to be a vehicle for informed democratic debate, is in fact achieving the opposite effects: obscuring the issues and manipulating opinion. Written in a clear, accessible style and drawing on illustrative examples, Genetically Modified Language is an insightful look at how language shapes our opinions.

作者介绍:

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