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The Ethics of
Genetic Technologies

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Advances in genetics research, largely spawned by the Human Genome Project, have led to a broad range of new technologies that promise to revolutionise many aspects of our lives. Medicine and agriculture are already starting to use new technologies to greatly improve disease prevention and treatment and food production. Yet these "improvements" often raise ethical questions that are not easy to untangle. Certain applications, such as embryonic stem cell research, pose unprecedented moral and ethical dilemmas. While the application of scientific advances to better mankind has always raised thorny issues, the ethical impact of genetic advances arguably reaches a new height because these advances are far-reaching and potentially irreversible. To utilise such technologies could mean saving thousands of lives, but where and how do we draw the ethical line? Here, the author sheds light on the ethical concerns surrounding various types of genetic technologies, introducing readers to the competing issues at stake in the arguments about the scientific application of the new technologies available and those on the horizon. She begins by illustrating the history of genetic advances, their societal applications, and the ethical issues that have arisen from those applications. Using case studies and examples throughout, she explains the considerations involved in a variety of areas related to the application of genetic technologies that are currently available, and those that may be possible in the future. Covering topics ranging from stem cell research to genetically modified food, genetic mapping to cloning, this book offers a thoughtful approach to the complex issues at play in the field of genetic technology.

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