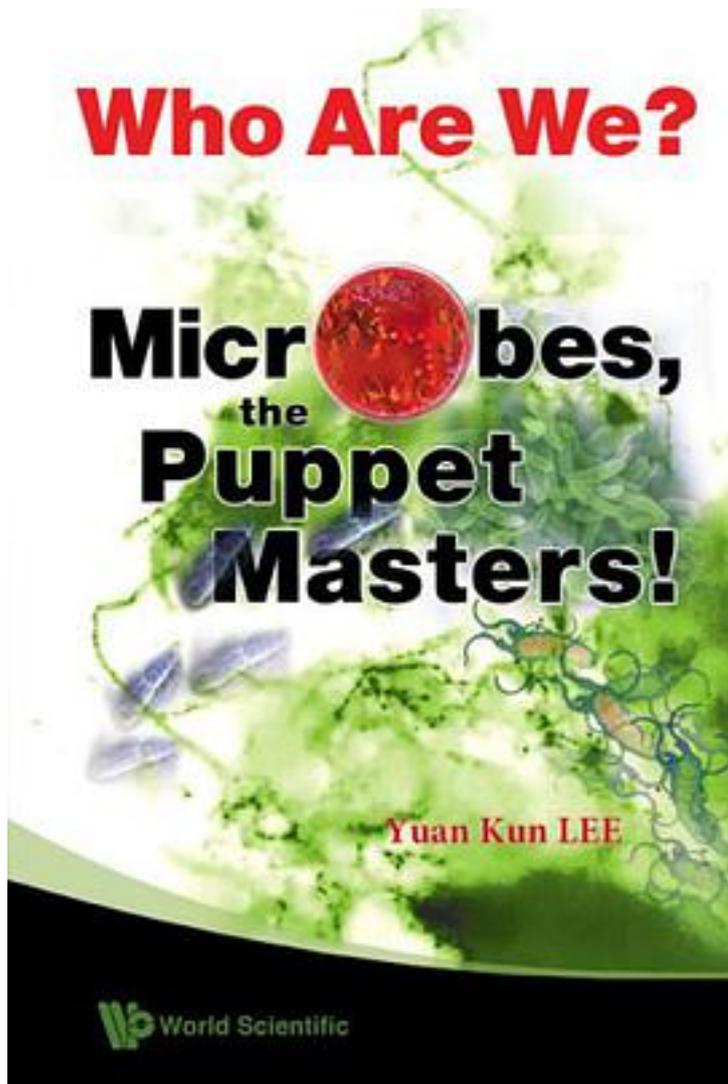


Who Are We? Microbes, the Puppet Masters!



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Our genome is littered with scraps of DNA, termed "junk" DNAs, that serve no apparent purpose. Junk DNAs make up as much as 98.5% of our genome. Scientists believe that some junk DNAs came into existence millions of years ago, when viruses inserted their DNA into that of the human host. There is emerging evidence that suggests that these bits of microbial DNAs may alter our functional genes, impacting our body physiology and behavior.

We have been invaded by "body snatchers" and they are part of us! We could postulate that we are carrying a large number of DNAs that serve only the DNAs, and we are just a small part of the big picture! There is ample scientific evidence to suggest that, even today, free-living microbes are still manipulating our behaviour and our life at large. They are thriving on our wet skin, in our mouth, and in our intestinal and vaginal tracts. We are perhaps not quite what we think we are.

This thought-provoking and inspiring book offers many answers, while at the same time raising many questions for future research.

Contents: Why Do You Get a Kick Out of Roller Coaster Rides and Bungee Jumps?; Looking Into the Cells: How Human Are We?; Looking Into the Command Post of Human Cells: The Nucleus, Are We Human at All?; Why Is There So Much Junk in Our Genes?; The Tendency of Humans to Trade-off Our Body Functions Under the Assault of Disease-causing Microbes; Looking Into Our Intestines; Why Do We Have Diarrhoea?; Do We Eat Because We Need the Food?; Microbes Help Those Who Help Themselves; Are We Fat Because We Eat Too Much and Exercise Too Little?; Our Indecent Liaison with Yeast; Who Is the Father of Democracy?; The Pseudo-Tyrants; Did HIV Learn From Smallpox?; Why Are Some Pathogens More Willing to Kill the Hosts than Others?; SARS Virus, the New Kid on the Block; Who Is Afraid of Bird Flu?; Why Do Microbes Want to Colonise the Human Body?; Does the Ability to Love Make Humans Different From Lower Forms of Organisms; Microbes Kill for Their Offspring!; Does Your Blood Type Determine Your Fortune?; A Human Body Without Microbes?.

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