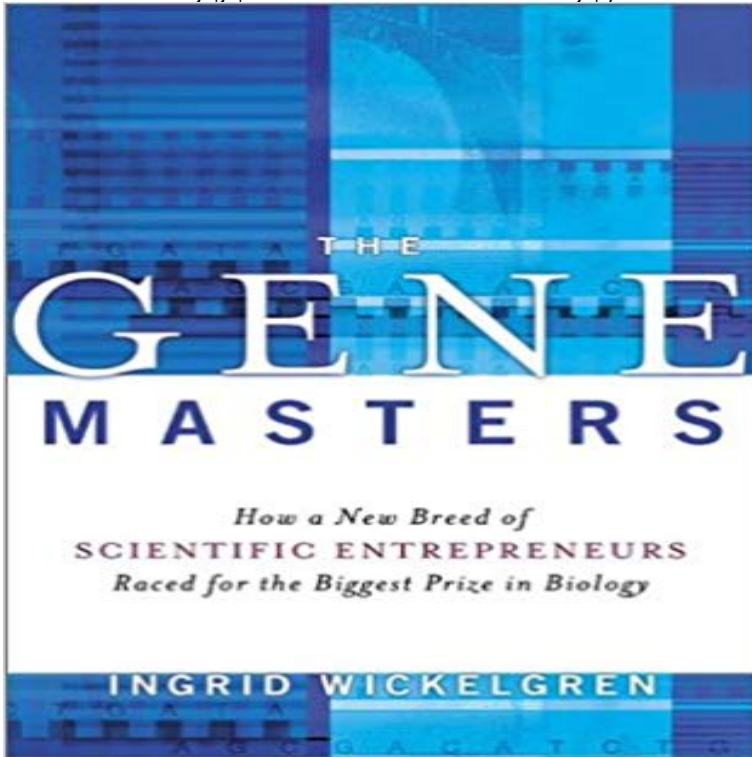


## The Gene Masters: How a New Breed of Scientific Entrepreneurs Raced for the Biggest Prize in Biology



A fast-paced account of the wildly ambitious scientists who spearheaded a scientific revolution. It was one of the greatest races in science. A confluence of ambition, intelligence, and money fueled the complete mapping of the human genome, the ultimate conclusion of a process that began fifty years ago when Watson and Crick broke open the essential structure of DNA. In the 1970s and 80s, most scientists considered sequencing the human genome a foolishly impractical dream. But as time went on, several breakthroughs revealed that this goal—medicines Holy Grail—was within reach. As the race heated up in the 1990s, science as we know it took on a whole new dimension, with private corporations elbowing out the government and academic labs. Inevitably, a race of another kind ensued, as scientists competed for credit and battled over the release of results into the public domain. High-flying scientists like gene king William Haseltine, cowboy biologist Craig Venter, and the altruistic and collectively minded Human Genome Project chief Francis Collins became media darlings, jockeying for attention, accolades, and potential riches. In this narrative account, Ingrid Wickelgren delves deeply into their motivations, fears, goals, and conflicts to reveal a fascinating story of big science, big dreams, and larger-than-life personalities. In the tradition of the classic *The Microbe Hunters*, *The Gene Masters* sheds light on the people behind one of the most contentious and enterprising scientific endeavors of our time.

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