code_
OF THE WILD
the nature of us, edited

PRESS NOTES

For Press Inquiries

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Short Synopsis

Code of the Wild explores the public and secret worlds of genetic engineering. Award-winning producer/director Cody Sheehy and CRISPR scientist Samira Kiani filmed for 18 months in United States and China documenting the biohackers and scientists involved in editing humans. Their team brought world attention to the secret work of Dr. Jiankui He, who first enhanced human babies in an attempt to make them immune to HIV. This story is at the heart of a revolution that will transform how we live and how we die.

Long Synopsis

Scientist now have the ability to modify DNA in profound new ways that will transform how we live and how we die. What kind of future will we create?

This question is at the heart of *Code of the Wild*, the timely thriller from award-winning filmmaker Cody Sheehy and CRISPR scientist Samira Kiani, that unveils the global power race of genomic engineering. International scientific communities recognize that the social, ethical, and medical benefits (and risks) of gene editing technologies need to be better understood by the public. Many scientists are concerned that the public is not part of this process. *Code of the Wild* intends to change that.

Told through lens of a curious journalist determined to get to the truth, *Code of the Wild* filmed for 18 months in United States and China documenting the biohackers and scientists involved in editing humans. Their team brought

world attention to the secret work of Dr. Jiankui He, who first enhanced human babies in an attempt to make them immune to HIV.

Code of the Wild is an epic documentary feature created to spark a global conversation regarding the social, ethical, and medical benefits (and risks) of gene editing technologies.

The feature documentary is a production of Rhumbline Media which is devoted to creating entertainment that inspires and empowers social change by leveraging technology that gives people a platform to elevate their voice. That platform is a storytelling technology called Filmstacker.

Statements

Cody Sheehy
Producer/Director

More than 20 years after I saw Gattaca, a genetic engineer called me and said she wanted to make a documentary about genetic engineering. She said the field was advancing faster than people realized. Within days, I discovered that she wanted me to tell the biggest untold story in the world. A story that would change how we are born, how we die, and how we manage the natural ecosystems on Earth. Something big enough that it may transform the world economy and play a role in the re-ordering of nation state powers. Today, the science fiction premise of Gattaca is coming true and we are entering the era of babies that are corrected and perfected before they are born. The consequences of this alone will have massive implications to the human race. The questions that we face next, may have even greater impact. How long should we program ourselves to live? Is the power to reshape your genetics something that only the rich can access, or is this a right for everyone? We can do these things, but we still have a moment to pause and ask if we should.

Samira Kiani, MD
Co-producer

Every human being carries around a unique story that deserves to be told. I have always been fascinated to learn about those untold stories, but as a

scientist, I am often confined to the scientific language of my profession. There is no room to explain the personal backgrounds of the scientists and why we choose what we study. The untold story in my field is that something as human as our ambitions will define the future. The technological breakthroughs in genetic engineering have massive implications to life in every corner of the Earth. This fascinated me and so I connected with Cody Sheehy late 2017 and embarked in a journey to unravel at least a small part of this ambition through the lens of "Code of the Wild."

What's at Stake

Imagine a future where BioTech industry uses custom organisms to produce fuel or to eat pollution in our groundwater. Where one country can decide to release a gene drive that will force the extinction of mosquitoes that carry disease. Where all people check to see if their genome is compatible with a partner before having children. Where genetic disease is corrected before birth and cancer is prevented in adults. Where novel animals are created to be sold as pets.

Many scientists are concerned that the public is not part of this process. International scientific communities recognize that the social, ethical, and medical benefits (and risks) of gene editing technologies need to be better understood by the public.

What kind of future will we create?

Would you enhance the intelligence of your child if everyone else was?

Should wealthy people live much longer than everyone else?

Can soldiers be genetically modified to protect them from a new era of Bioweapons?

Is the risk of a pandemic virus greater from the lab of a rogue scientist or the garage of a biohacker?

How should we draw a line between genetic modifications for health and vanity traits? Or should we draw a line at all?

With a technology this much accessible and widely adopted, how should we regulate the usage or react to unexpected developments globally?

The Storytellers

George Church, PhD
Professor of Genetics, Harvard Medical School

George is shaping the genomic revolution through his influential network in science, business, and political circles. Our team follows George in his Harvard lab, one of the largest in the world, and as he tours his various business interests in the U.S. and China. Ultimately, he reveals that his trials with dogs to reverse aging are underway and that human trials begin in two years. His vision for the future is one that can imagine how genomics will enable humans to sustain a massive population on the Earth and other planets.

Antonio Regalado
Senior Editor, MIT Technology Review

In many ways Antonio serves as a lone watchdog on the remarkable technological achievements in genomic engineering and the implications to future society. Our team arranged for Antonio to interview Professor Huang (who edited humans embryos in 2015) and also introduced Antonio to Dr. He Jiankui (whose clinical trials have lead to the first gene edited babies). Our film follows Antonio as he breaks the International CRISPR baby story.

Josiah Zayner, PhD
Biohacker

Dr. Josiah Zayner the anointed leader of the Biohackers, has a strong and controversial voice online that actively promotes the dissemination of low-cost genetic engineering knowledge and tools to the public. His story begins in a childhood dominated with pentecostal religion, to working as a genetic scientist for NASA, and ultimately to dropping out of mainstream science. He serves as our guide to the underground world of outsider non-scientists who

are adapting these new technologies for their own experiments. The importance of his story is made relevant by the FBI special agents who are keeping track of "insider, outsider, and nation state threats" and the bioterrorism countermeasures in development.

The Filmmakers

Cody Sheehy
Producer/Director, Co-founder and Head of Video Production, Rhumbline Media

Cody Sheehy, is an Emmy award winning filmmaker responsible for the creative vision and execution of high impact documentary and social media campaigns at Rhumbline Media. Cody has successfully produced documentaries and campaigns all over the world, from the Steppes of Mongolia, the Australian Outback, to the Jungles of Costa Rica. His films are focused on stories about our changing world told from the perspective of people in science and the natural environment and have aired on PBS affiliate stations across the United States, Amazon Prime, the Internet and in film festivals. He is also the co-founder of a technology startup company, Filmstacker, that is the first online collaborative video platform to offer real time dynamic exploration of video stories that are created with machine learning. Cody is also the video coordinator for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, where he manages a documentary film unit for the University of Arizona. His unique ability to tell these stories stems from his long passion for science, technology and the environment. He holds a Master's of Science in Ecology, is a published author in scientific journals, and has worked closely with academics from around the world for nearly two decades. It is his passion to continue to weave science into communication packages that are effective, inspiring, and that have impact in a challenging communication environment.

Samira Kiani
Producer, Assistant Professor, Arizona State University

Samira Kiani's career is built around her passion for applying the CRISPR technology to synthetic biology. She has demonstrated multiple transformative innovations with CRISPR, including modulatory circuits that precisely control gene modifications. As an Assistant Professor in the school of Biological and Health Systems Engineering at Arizona State University, she has established her own independent research program to combine CRISPR technology with Synthetic biology with an interest to develop safer and controllable gene therapies. She has been working in the area of genetic engineering since 2010 in Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), when zinc finger nucleases and Tale Nucleases were introduced for genome engineering in human somatic and stem cells. In 2013, she started to work with the CRISPR technology while pursuing her postdoctoral training in the laboratory of Dr. Ron Weiss (MIT). During her postdoctoral years, she established collaborative projects with pioneers of the field of CRISPR, including Dr. George Church's lab (Harvard) to further advance CRISPR technology. She is the recipient of DARPA Young Faculty Award, and serves in the organizing committee of multiple CRISPR and Synthetic Biology conferences and have published high impact papers in the field of CRISPR and synthetic biology.

Steve Burns
Advisor, Chief Content Officer, Curiosity Stream

Steve Burns is Chief Content Officer for CuriosityStream.com, a newly launched subscription-video-on-demand (SVOD) channel and is responsible for 600 hours of production and acquisitions. His career spans more than 25 years from National Geographic cinematographer/producer to senior executive positions at Discovery Networks, including GM of Science Channel, returning to National Geographic as Executive Vice President of Global Content for NGC worldwide. Most recently, he was also a freelance Executive Producer for WNET/ NY's long-running Secrets of the Dead series for PBS in the U.S. At Discovery Channel, Burns was a part of the team that established partnerships with AAAS for a weekly science news program and helped initiate the Montana State University/ Discovery Channel internships and MFA program for natural history and science filmmaking. He has won multiple industry awards, including two Emmys for 5 Years on Mars and Spirit of the

Rainforest. His teams have been nominated for two Academy Awards, over 200 Emmy nominations, including dozens of wins, and two Peabody Awards.

Rhumbline Media

Launched in 2016, Rhumbline Media is devoted to creating entertainment that inspires and empowers social change by leveraging technology that gives people a platform to elevate their voice. To do this, they partner with Filmstacker.

Filmstacker

Launched in 2018, Filmstacker is a robust storytelling technology that uses AI with non-render video editing to turn audiences into promotional advocates. They are humble disruptors determined to make a positive impact on the world.