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**The Genome Generation** (Elizabeth Finkel, MUP, \$32.99 tpb, ISBN 9780522856477, January) © (November 2011)

Within the first few pages of *The Genome Generation* I realised how ignorant I was about the world of scientific research. It didn't matter, as Elizabeth Finkel offers an excellent explanation of the science of genomes through clever metaphor, which goes beyond the clichéd notion of genomes representing the complexity of a computer. This is not to say that *The Genome Generation* is pitched at a basic level. Finkel spends a lot of time looking to the future to consider the likely progression of genome research. She examines current debates regarding the potential of genome research, particularly in the field of developing a vaccine for HIV/AIDS, and the ancestral genetic makeup that may be of crucial importance. Finkel also offers

readers advice on how to apply the science of genomes to their everyday lives, for example, through the effects of environment on offspring, and warns of the dangers of 'dabbling where you don't understand the controls of the system'. Finkel writes that her aim is to 'empower the reader to know what to ask' of genomes and in this task she has certainly succeeded. Her wit, knowledge and fascination with the intricacies of genomes is evident, and quite frankly, contagious.

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