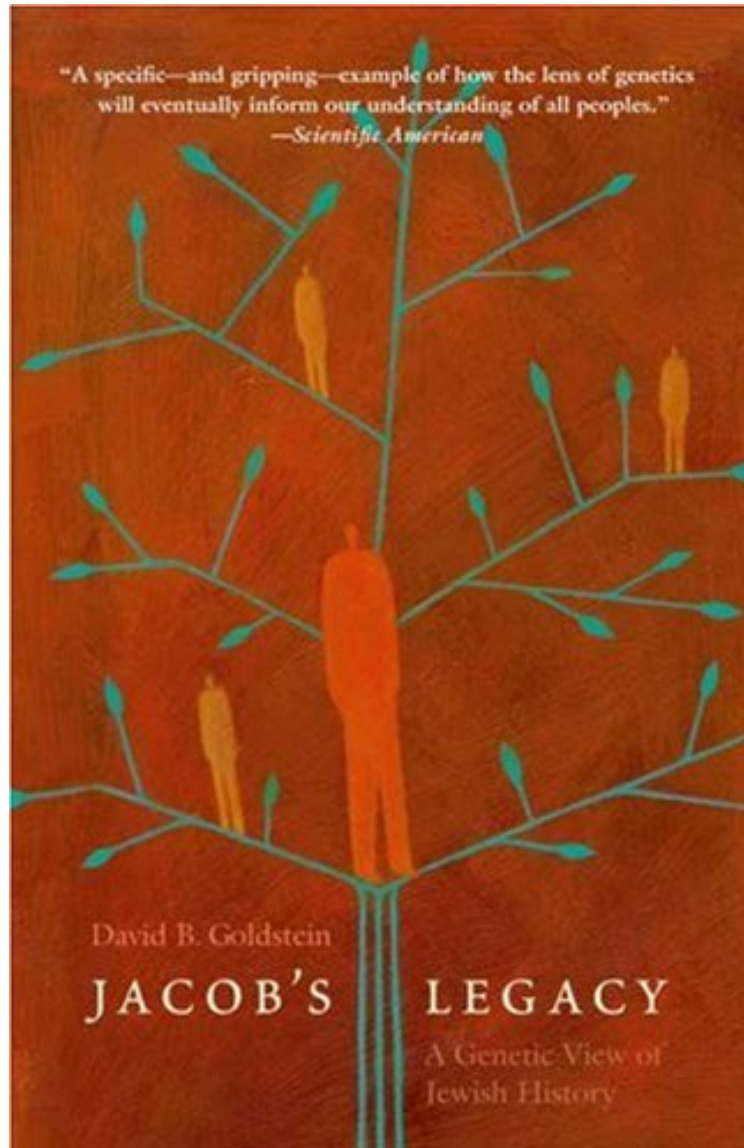


(Mobile book) Jacob's Legacy: A Genetic View of Jewish History

Jacob's Legacy: A Genetic View of Jewish History

David B. Goldstein

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David B. Goldstein : Jacob's Legacy: A Genetic View of Jewish History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jacob's Legacy: A Genetic View of Jewish History:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent introduction to the genetics of Jewish ancestry for the lay reader.By ShadowreaderAn excellent introduction to Jewish Genetics, this book is readily understood by lay readers without any scientific background. The author weaves an engaging personal narrative as he recounts his own scientific

research, and explains what recent molecular genetic studies has revealed about the relations and history of the Jewish people. He discusses how genetics complements, but does not replace, traditional history and archaeology. It is important to note that the author has been involved in this work himself (with colleagues) and is intimately acquainted with the conclusions and how far they can be carried and (just as importantly) the limitations of the research and what conclusions should not be drawn. While the author is himself Jewish, and there are references to Jewish and Biblical history, he maintains a professional, scientific approach to the data. The book includes some notes and a solid bibliography, mostly relating to Jewish history rather than biology. Topics include: research and discoveries involving the Y-chromosome showing high conservation among Cohanim; the Lemba; mitochondrial (female) inheritance and discussion of atypical patterns, genetic bottlenecks and what these might imply; discussion of anomalous Levite patterns; he discusses but does not resolve the contentious Khazari issue. Readers with strong background in biology/genetics may find it limited in detail. Personally, I would have liked to see more detail about the alleles studied, but realize that is not appropriate for the broad audience the author is trying to reach. Scientific publications and references would also be helpful. After several years, some of these papers may no longer be behind a paywall. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Clear Exposition of Some Topics in Jewish Genetic History By Anne Mills An interesting study of various topics in Jewish genetics, by a geneticist who was centrally involved in the research that underlies the book. First, it examines genetic evidence suggesting that a specific group of modern-day Jews (those identifying themselves as of priestly decent, many named Cohen or some variant thereof) are in fact descended directly from the priests of ancient Israel. Second, he shows that there is indeed genetic evidence of Jewish descent for an African tribe whose legends claim such descent. Finally, he looks at the claim that a study of "Jewish diseases" like Tay-Sachs showed that Jews have genetic predisposition to high intelligence. This evidence he does not find convincing, arguing that there are several other possible explanations for Jewish intellectual achievement, and that much more study is needed. One of the virtues of this book is that it discusses what genetics cannot (at present) tell us, as well as at what it can. Another is that the book presents a clear exposition of how geneticists trace lines of descent -- material which at least one lay reader needs to have explained again and again. The weakness of the book -- it's a less than gripping read -- is the result of its virtues: it is a carefully scientific piece. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read! By Cicero Great read! Highly recommended in case you are curious as to whether the the current Israeli's, living in Israel, are really the Jews/Hebrews of old.

Who are the Jews? Where did they come from? What is the connection between an ancient Jewish priest in Jerusalem and today's Israeli sunbather on the beaches of Tel Aviv? These questions stand at the heart of this engaging book. Geneticist David Goldstein analyzes modern DNA studies of Jewish populations and examines the intersections of these scientific findings with the history (both biblical and modern) and oral tradition of the Jews. With a special gift for translating complex scientific concepts into language understandable to all, Goldstein delivers an accessible, personal, and fascinating book that tells the history of a group of people through the lens of genetics. In a series of detective-style stories, Goldstein explores the priestly lineage of Jewish males as manifested by Y chromosomes; the Jewish lineage claims of the Lemba, an obscure black South African tribe; the differences in maternal and paternal genetic heritage among Jewish populations; and much more. The author also grapples with the medical and ethical implications of our rapidly growing command of the human genomic landscape. The study of genetics has not only changed the study of Jewish history, Goldstein shows, it has altered notions of Jewish identity and even our understanding of what makes a people a people.

From Publishers Weekly Duke University geneticist Goldstein was part of a team that did groundbreaking, headline-making research on Jewish genetic history. Goldberg clearly and succinctly explains such concepts as haplotypes and genetic drift as he reviews such findings as that more than half of contemporary Cohanim, or prieststraditionally believed to descend from the biblical Aaron actually share a genetic marker called the Cohen Modal Haplotype. Among other subjects, he also explores evidence consistent with the claim of the obscure Lemba tribe of southern Africa to be descendants of ancient Israel. Lastly, in taking on a 2005 study of a group of so-called Jewish genetic diseases such as Tay-Sachs and their putative evolutionary connection to high intelligence among Jews, Goldberg notes that this hypothesis is easily testable but firmly rejects pseudoscientific genetic determinism. Goldberg's role in much of the research into Jewish genetic history, his sober, unsensationalist tone and his emphasis on the limited conclusions that can be drawn from such work lend credibility to his account of his stunning results. (June) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Even readers unfamiliar with science will have no difficulty understanding this excellent book. David Goldstein clearly explains how modern genetics integrates with multiple aspects of Jewish history and demography." Kenneth Kidd, Yale University