What’s more dangerous: biology or synthetic biology?

Tom Knight got the bug for bioscience while he was a computer engineer at MIT. He founded the synthetic biology field and help set up bioengineering company Ginkgo BioWorks. He says we’ll soon be able to engineer living things with mechanical precision.

Andy Coghlan: How is synthetic biology different from biotechnology?

Tom Knight: The main difference is the degree of control. Engineers want their inventions to be as predictable and free from complexity as possible. That’s what makes the approach of equipping living things with standardized DNA modules called BioBricks—of which some 15,000 are now available in an open-source registry—different from the prevailing biotechnological practice of inserting single genes randomly into living things. The key realization is that biology is a manufacturing capability. We can have it build the things we want.

View the original article here: What’s More Dangerous: Biology or Synthetic Biology?