

Precision medicine: Over promising genetic breakthroughs offers patients false hope

Science has always issued medical promissory notes. In the 17th century, Francis Bacon promised that an understanding of the true mechanisms of disease would enable us to extend life almost indefinitely... But no science has been more optimistic, more based on promises, than medical genetics....

In our particular moment...the perennial desire for simple solutions to complex problems leads people back time and again to biological determinism: it's all in your genes. It's all in your neurons. This new discovery changes everything.

The possibility of vast profits in biotech also contribute to the propensity for hype....As the molecular biologist James Watson – no stranger to hype himself – wrote in his memoir *Avoid Boring People* (2007): 'Nothing attracts money like the quest for a cure for a terrible disease.'

Finally, the researchers and their funders vie for attention from a news media that is itself constantly competing for an overstimulated and numb audience....

...One way is to hold scientists, philanthropists and the press accountable...Fund science liberally, but reward knowledge more than market value. Encourage science literacy, not just cheerleading. And teach skepticism of technology, medicine and the media....

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Why the hype around medical genetics is a public enemy](#)