

Podcast: Twisted history—The true story of how the DNA double helix was discovered

“History is written by the victors.” It’s a quote often attributed to Winston Churchill, and it’s certainly true of many discoveries in science, where being the first to publish a major finding is enough to secure your name in the history books (or at least in the science textbooks...)

The book, *The Double Helix*, is a dramatic tale of how American geneticist James Watson and British molecular biologist Francis Crick discovered the structure of DNA back in the early 1950s. Of course, being written by Watson himself, it’s no surprise that he’s the dashing hero of the story.

Big names like Watson and Crick take much of the glory for the discovery of the structure of DNA, while others like [Maurice Wilkins, Rosalind Franklin and Ray Gosling](#) are increasingly recognized for their contributions. But there are still many others whose work contributed to our understanding of the structure and function of DNA, such as Johannes Friedrich Miescher, Fred Griffith, Oswald Avery, Rudolf Signer and Elwyn Beighton.

In this episode of Genetics Unzipped, geneticist Kat Arney talks with [Gareth Williams, professor emeritus at the University of Bristol](#) and author of ‘[Unravelling the Double Helix: The Lost Heroes of DNA](#)’, to explore some of the lesser-known stories and names behind the discovery of the structure and function of DNA.

<https://geneticliteracyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/309-The-true-story-of-double-helix-Genetics-Unzipped.mp3>

Full transcript, links and references available online at [GeneticsUnzipped.com](https://geneticsunzipped.com)

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