

# Genes on Trial



Columnist Stanley Crouch and dean Karen Rothenberg, in the roles of husband and wife, argue whether they should partake in a study to determine whether there is a gene that predisposes certain people to alcoholism.

**STANLEY CROUCH:**

If you isolate this, what good does it do? I mean, does that mean that in the future people will not be susceptible to this problem?

I mean, for instance, James Joyce was an alcoholic. Ernest Hemingway was an alcoholic. What little we know about Shakespeare, he liked to get a nip every now and then. So we have extraordinary people. Now the question I'm raising is: does science allow us to know what quality of person is going to arrive even if the person has that problem? Because I don't particularly believe that what makes human beings important is determined by whether or not they have a certain liability.

**KAREN ROTHENBERG:**

Stanley, come on now. I don't like the fact that you drink so much. And I just... I'm curious because I'm worried about our son. Let's say you do this study and you find out that our family or groups of families have these predispositions, I'm worried he's gonna drink more, cause now he's gonna have an excuse. And he's just gonna say, "See, I'm not a bad guy. You did it, Mom and Dad, both of you did it to us."