

Science in the Cinema-Los Angeles

Thursday March 25, 7 PM

123 Seeley G. Mudd Building at USC

Feature Film: **GATTACA**

Post-film Discussion Leader: **Dr. French Anderson**



According to Roger Ebert, **GATTACA** "is one of the smartest and most provocative of science fiction films, a thriller with ideas." A remarkable debut of writer-director, Andrew Niccol.

Vincent, played by Ethan Hawke, dreams of joining an expedition to one of Saturn's moons. Unfortunately, he is a genetic "Invalid" with bad eyesight, heart problems and a life expectancy of about 30 years. He develops a partnership with Jerome (Jude Law), who has the right genes but was paralyzed in an accident. Jerome provides Vincent with a new identity based on blood and urine samples. Vincent is attracted to Irene (Uma Thurman), but romance can be dangerous; a woman is likely to have a man's kiss swabbed to test his prospects.

At a time when we read about cloned sheep, the science in **GATTACA** is theoretically possible. When parents can order "perfect" babies, will they?

www.suntimes.com/ebert/ebert_reviews/1997/10/102403.html

Dr. W. French Anderson was the **Science Advisor for GATTACA**. He is the Director of the Gene Therapy Laboratories at the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine, where he also serves as Professor of Biochemistry and Pediatrics. His present research focusses on the development of advanced gene therapy delivery systems that target cancer, cardiovascular and genetic diseases. Before joining the USC faculty in 1992, Dr. Anderson worked in gene therapy research for 27 years at the National Institutes of Health. He headed the team that carried out the first approved human gene therapy clinical protocol in 1990, and is often called the "Father of Gene Therapy." He is also known as a leading ethicist in the field of human genetic engineering.

Dr. Anderson was born and raised in Tulsa Oklahoma and received an A.B. in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard College in 1958, an M.A. in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University (England) in 1960, and an M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1963. Dr. Anderson has published over 375 research articles in leading scientific journals, and has also written articles for non-specialist in *Scientific American* and *Newsweek*. Dr. Anderson has won many awards for his pioneering work in gene therapy. Additionally, he was named one of *Time Magazine's* Heroes of Medicine in 1997, and in 1998 was both the Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher of the Year at USC School of Medicine and a Gold Medal winner at the National Karate Championships.



Science in the Cinema-Los Angeles

The Southern California Section was awarded an American Chemical Society *Innovative Program Grant* to launch the Science in the Cinema-Los Angeles program. Feature films with science themes are screened on local college campuses, followed by a speaker and discussion on a related topic. Admission is free. For more information visit:

www.scalacs.org/ScienceCinema