Alec J. Jeffreys Encyclopedia Article

Alec J. Jeffreys

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Contents

Alec J. Jeffreys Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Alec J. Jeffreys.....3

Alec J. Jeffreys

1950-

British biologist who discovered the process of genetic fingerprinting and who helped discover the genetic marker for colon cancer. Genetic fingerprinting has become increasingly useful in law enforcement and in establishing paternity because it identifies certain stretches of DNA that, although unique to each individual, also show patterns that run in families. This, in turn, has allowed genetic testing to be used to show guilt in many cases as well as proving the innocence of many who had been falsely accused. See long biography on p. 157.