Walter Gilbert Encyclopedia Article

Walter Gilbert

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Contents

Walter Gilbert Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Walter Gilbert.....3

Walter Gilbert

1932-

American molecular biologist who isolated the lactose repressor in *Escherichia coli,* the first time such a genetic control component had been identified. In 1980 he shared the Nobel Prize in chemistry with Frederick Sanger and Paul Berg for contributions concerning the determination of base sequences in nucleic acids. The sequencing techniques developed by Gilbert and Sanger, and the gene-splitting techniques of Berg, provided the basis for genetic engineering. In 1978 Gilbert helped found Biogen, a pioneering biotechnology firm, and served as its chairman and CEO until 1984.