

Preface

Recombinant DNA methods are revolutionary techniques that allow the cloning of a single gene—isolation of a gene or a complementary DNA (cDNA) in large amounts—from a pool of millions of genes. These techniques also allow specific modification of the isolated genes and their regulatory regions for analysis or for using cDNAs or modified cDNAs to produce large amounts of specific RNA or protein molecules. These powerful new methods lead to unprecedented possibilities for solving complex biological problems or for producing new and improved products in the fields of medicine, agriculture, and industry.

This volume of *Selected Methods in Enzymology* includes important contributions from Volumes 216, 217, and 218 of *Methods in Enzymology*. The selection of articles was based mainly on the following criteria: inclusion in the article of an extensive description or theoretical discussion of important methods and specific, up-to-date, and useful information.

Where a cross reference is given to a volume and paper in this series, it refers to the *Methods in Enzymology* series. Where only volumes or paper numbers are referred to, the volumes are also those in the *Methods in Enzymology* series.

I thank the authors and the staff of Academic Press who made this volume possible.

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