

## **An Empirical Test for General Purpose Technology: An examination of the Cohen-Boyer's rDNA technology**

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General Purpose Technology (GPT) provides fundamental breakthroughs that transform products and industries and provide a platform for increased productivity throughout the economy. However, a fundamental question is how to discern which new technologies have the potential to be transformative. A large theoretical literature examines characteristics of GPT yet there is little empirical work that attempts to consider the attributes of candidate technologies. Our objective is to define a set of empirically-testable predictions about GPTs. Our analysis focuses on the Cohen-Boyer rDNA patent, an arguable candidate for a GPT. We empirically test our predictions against a control group of patents with similar origins.