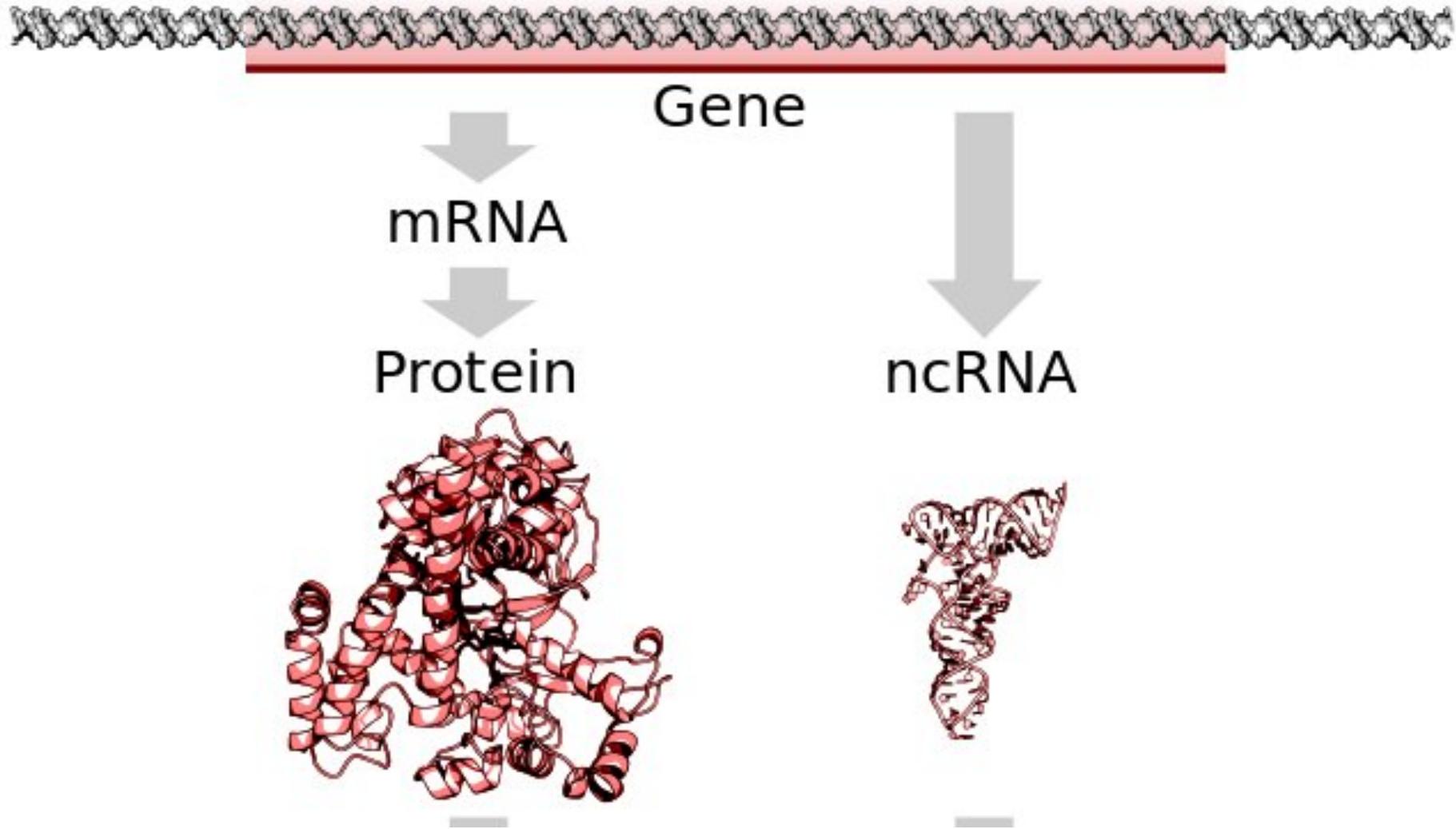
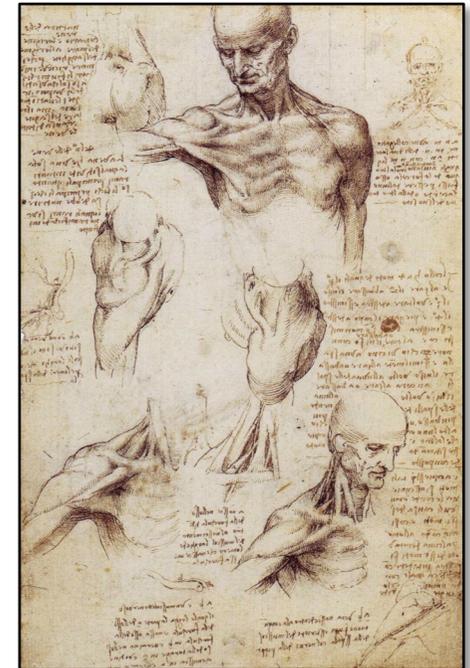
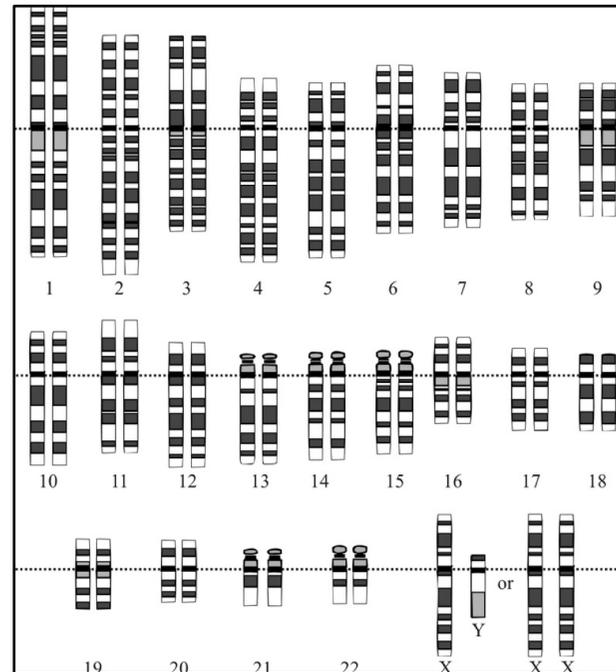
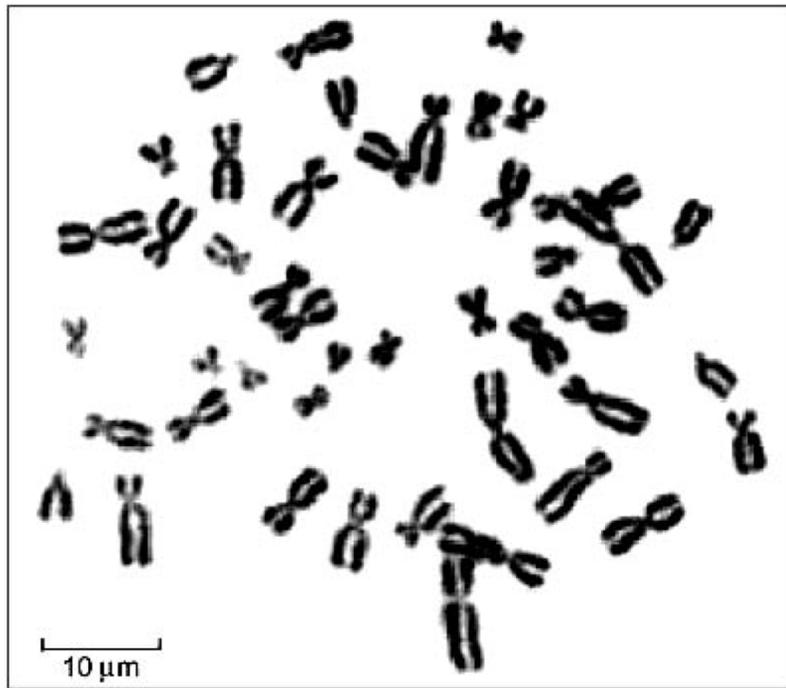


# Non coding RNA Biology

AA 2024/2025



# The human genome is highly structured



The human genome:  
22 autosome pairs  
2 Sex chromosome pairs (XX o XY)  
Total haploid genome  $3 \times 10^9$

# The human genome is highly structured

Chromatin: DNA + protein in nucleus

Organisation of genetic information

## Function:

Packaging of DNA

Compaction of DNA

Definition of regions of gene

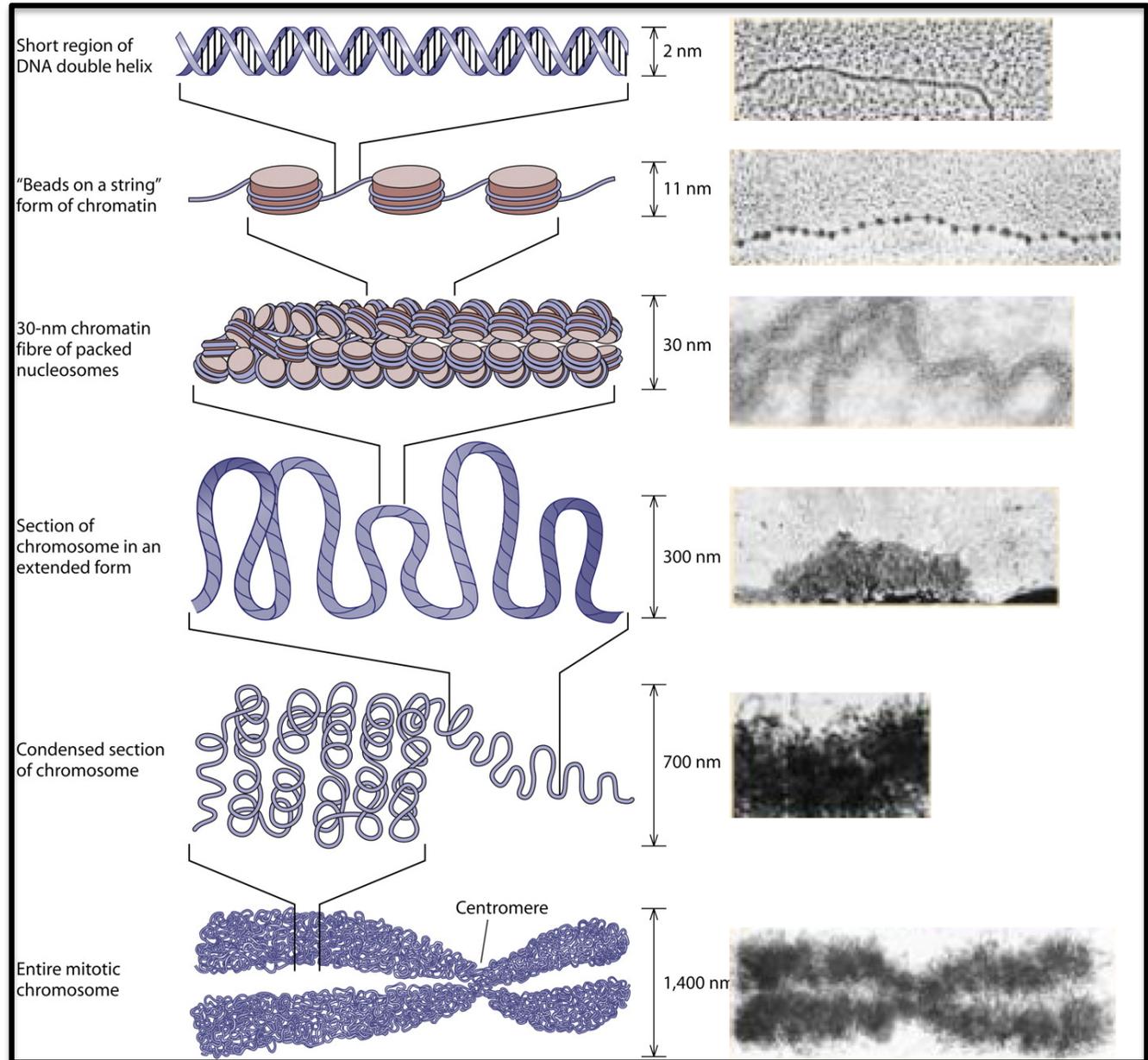
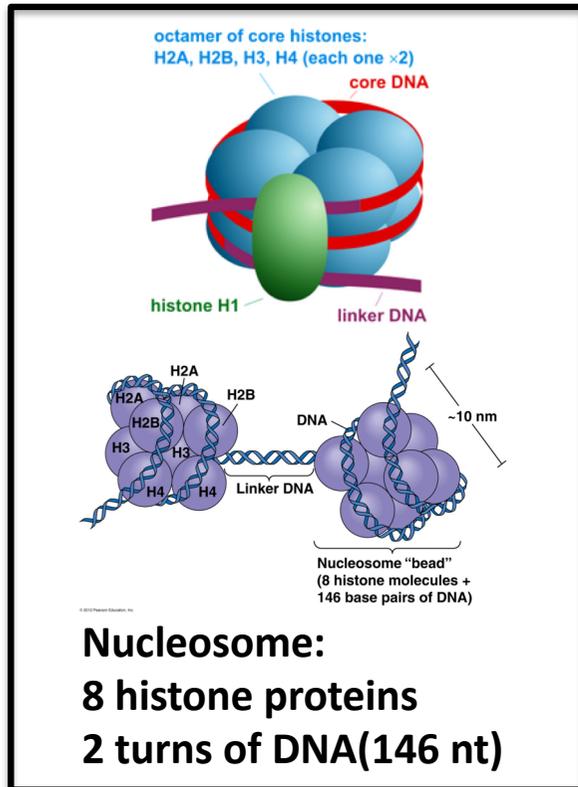
Expression (euchromatin) or repression (heterochromatin)

-Increasing stability of DNA

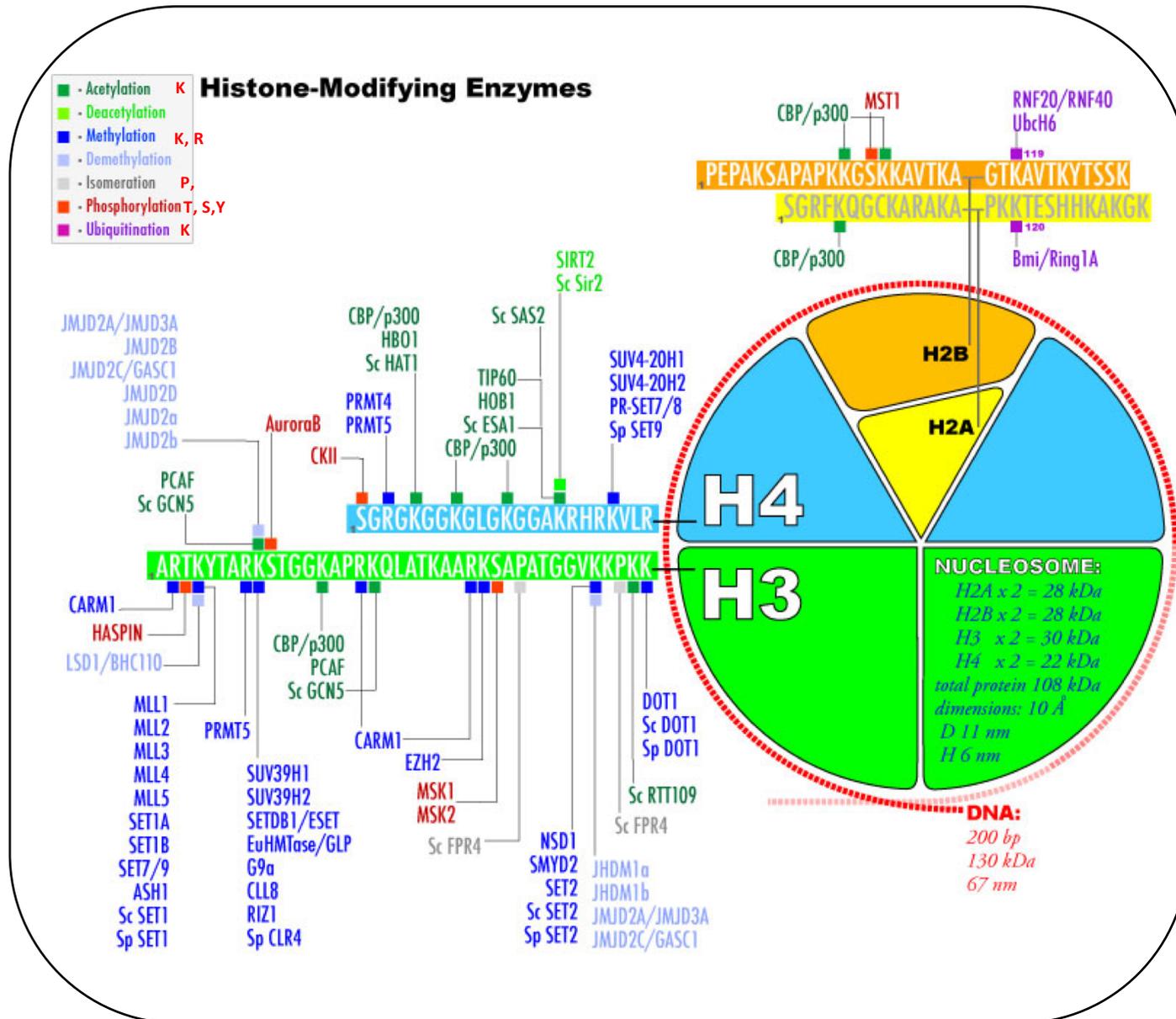
-Prevention of damage

-Control of replication, gene expression

-Cell cycle



# POST-TRANSLATIONAL HISTONE MODIFICATIONS



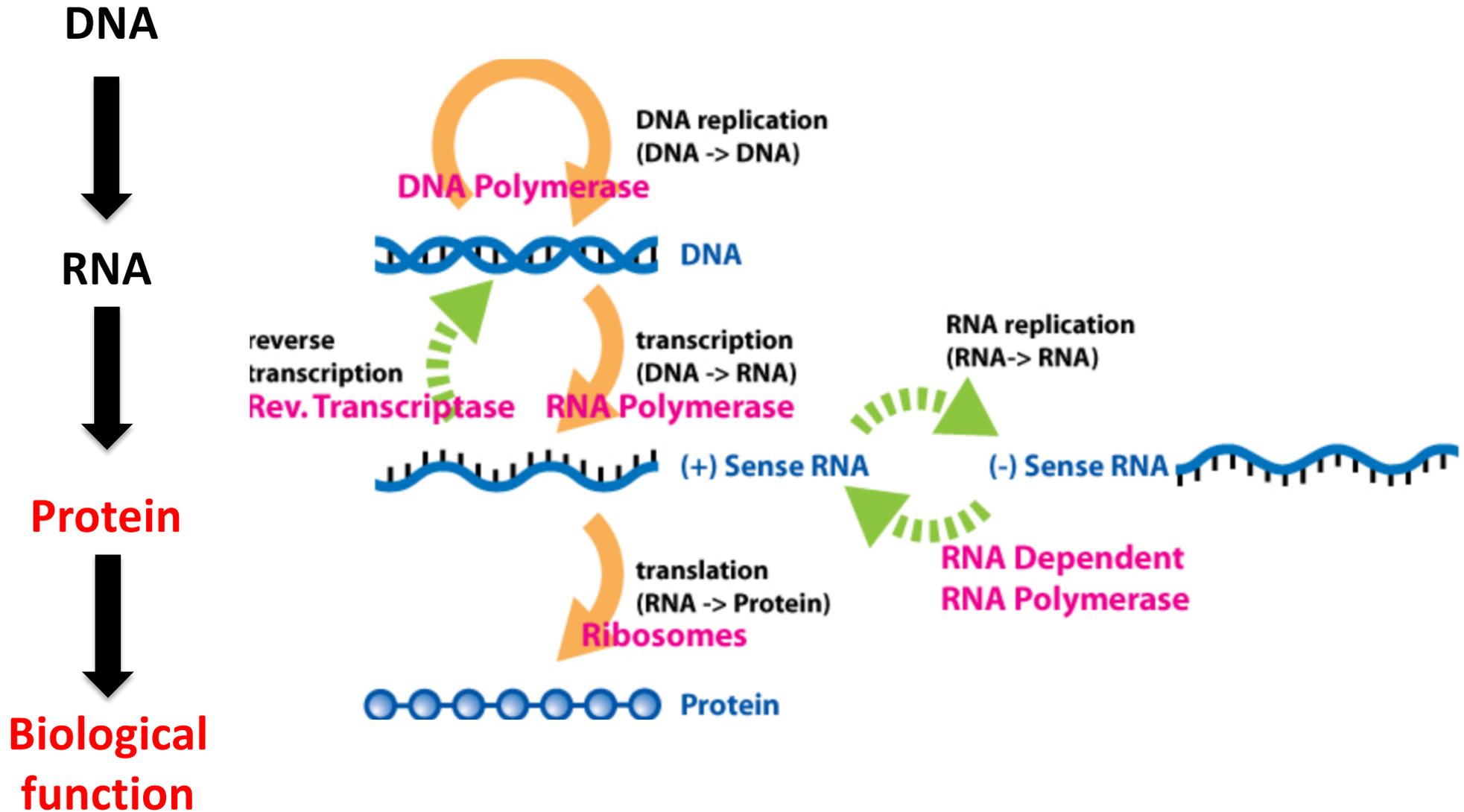
Gene expression  
 Control by post-translational histone modifications

→ Activate transcription (H3K9 acetylation, ...)  
 → Repress transcription (H3K27 trimethylation)  
 can be cell type specific

**Sum of all modifications = HISTONE CODE**

Specific histone + modifications at promoters Enhancers, along active Genes, site of termination

# The central dogma of molecular biology ...and a protein centred point of view



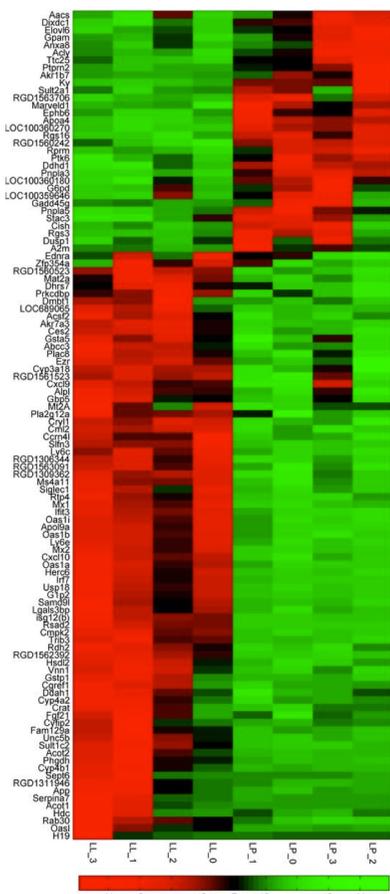
# The human genome encodes information that underlies cell specification in multi-cellular organisms

**GENOME**



**Specific gene expression programs**

lymphocyte      neuron



**Cell function**

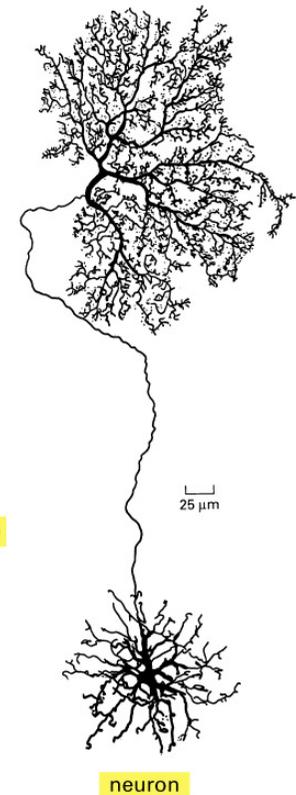
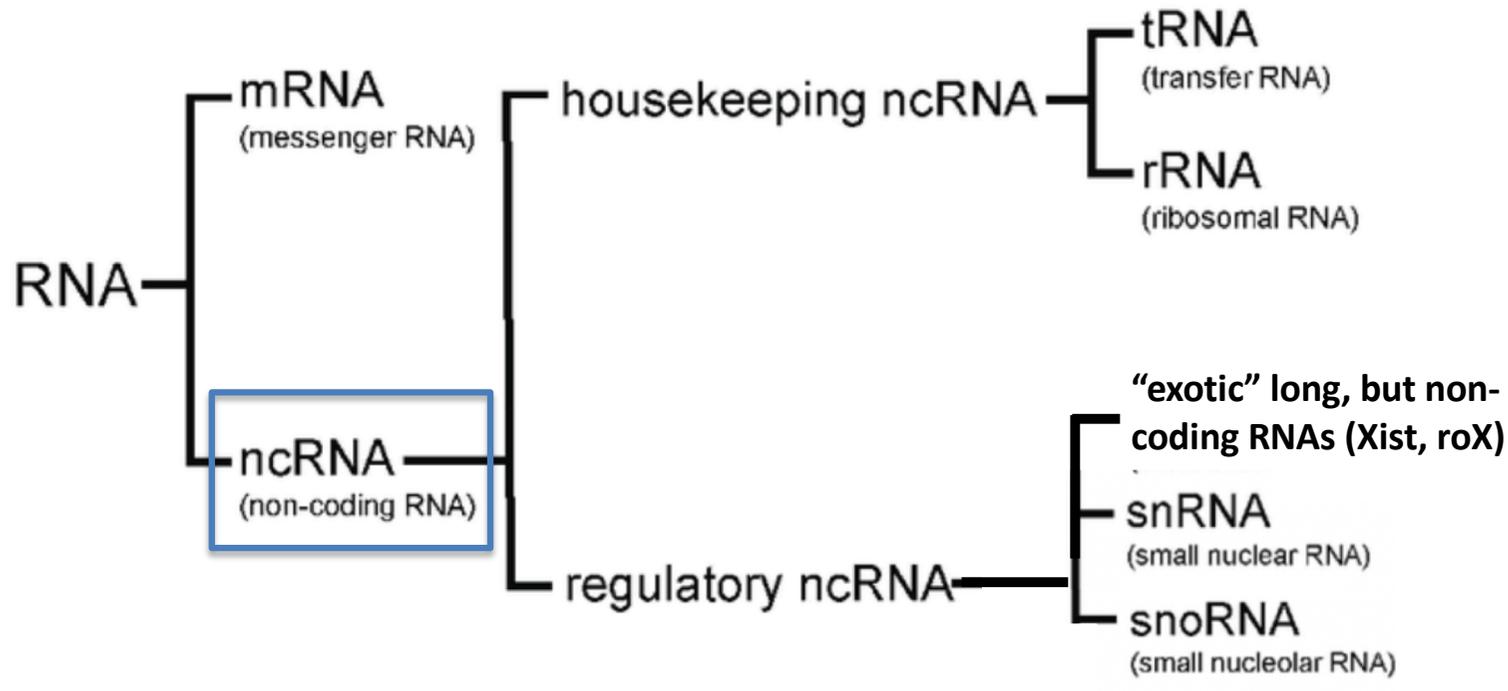


Figure 7-1. Molecular Biology of the Cell, 4th Edition.

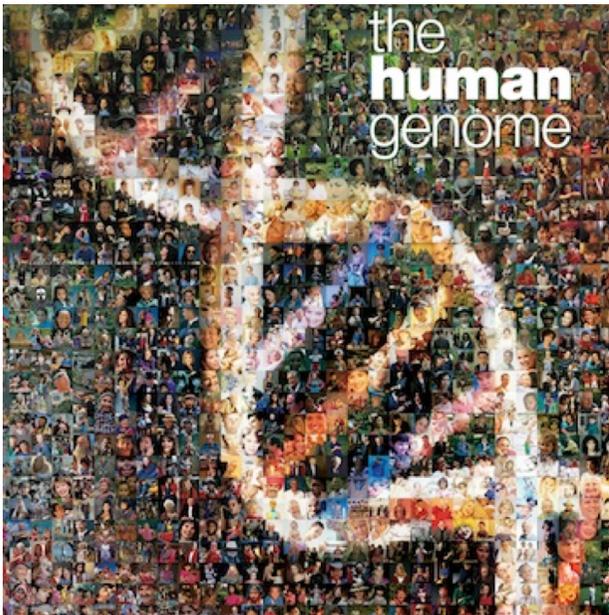
***Genetic information must be highly organized***

# A classic view on eukaryotic non-coding RNAs

until late 1990ies



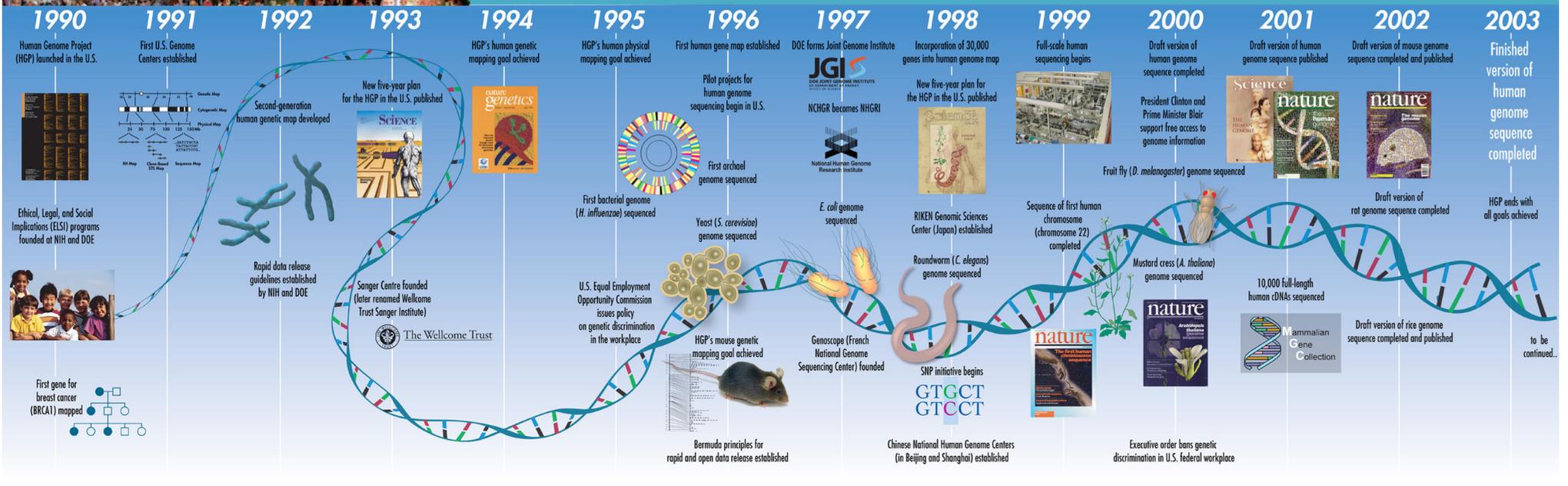
1. mRNAs → protein coding → development, differentiation, disease
2. ncRNAs → defined biochemical activity to ensure mRNA processing and protein expression
3. A few “exotic RNAs” (such as Xist) → function identified due to genetic experiments, no idea on biochemical activity



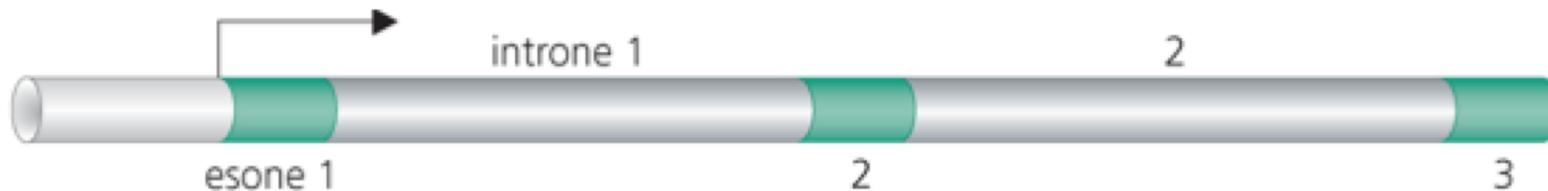
# WHOLE GENOME SEQUENCING TO GRASP THE COMPLEXITY OF GENETIC INFORMATION

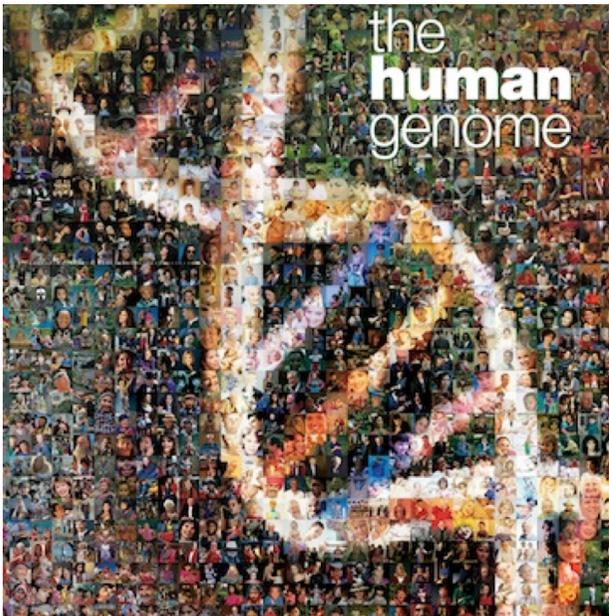
## THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

### SEQUENCING OF GENOMIC DNA



### ISOLATE LARGE PIECES OF DNA AND SEQUENCE!





# WHOLE GENOME SEQUENCING TO GRASP THE COMPLEXITY OF GENETIC INFORMATION

## DNA SEQUENCING OF MULTIPLE SPECIES GAVE SURPRISES

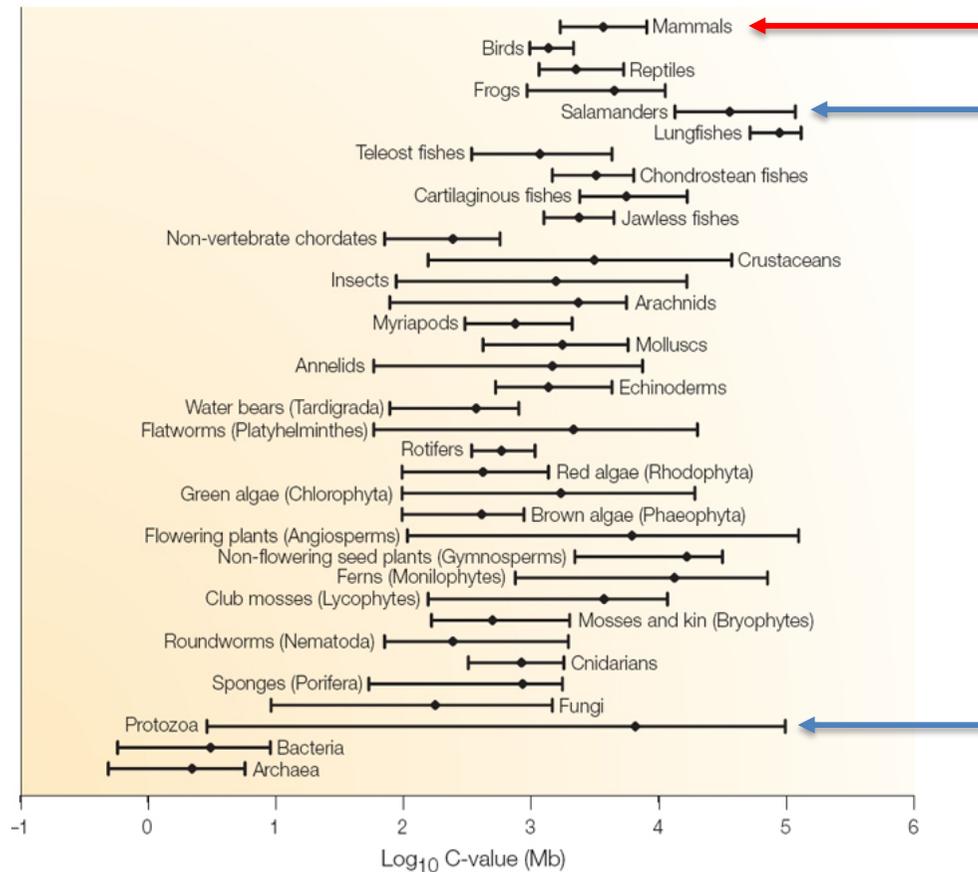
### Confirmation of the C-value paradox:

The amount of DNA in a haploid genome (the 1C value) does correspond strongly to the complexity of an organism. 1C values can be extremely variable.

### Vertebrates:

Only 1-2% of the genome is composed of exons that encode protein

**What DNA sequences are present in «junk» regions of genomic DNA?**

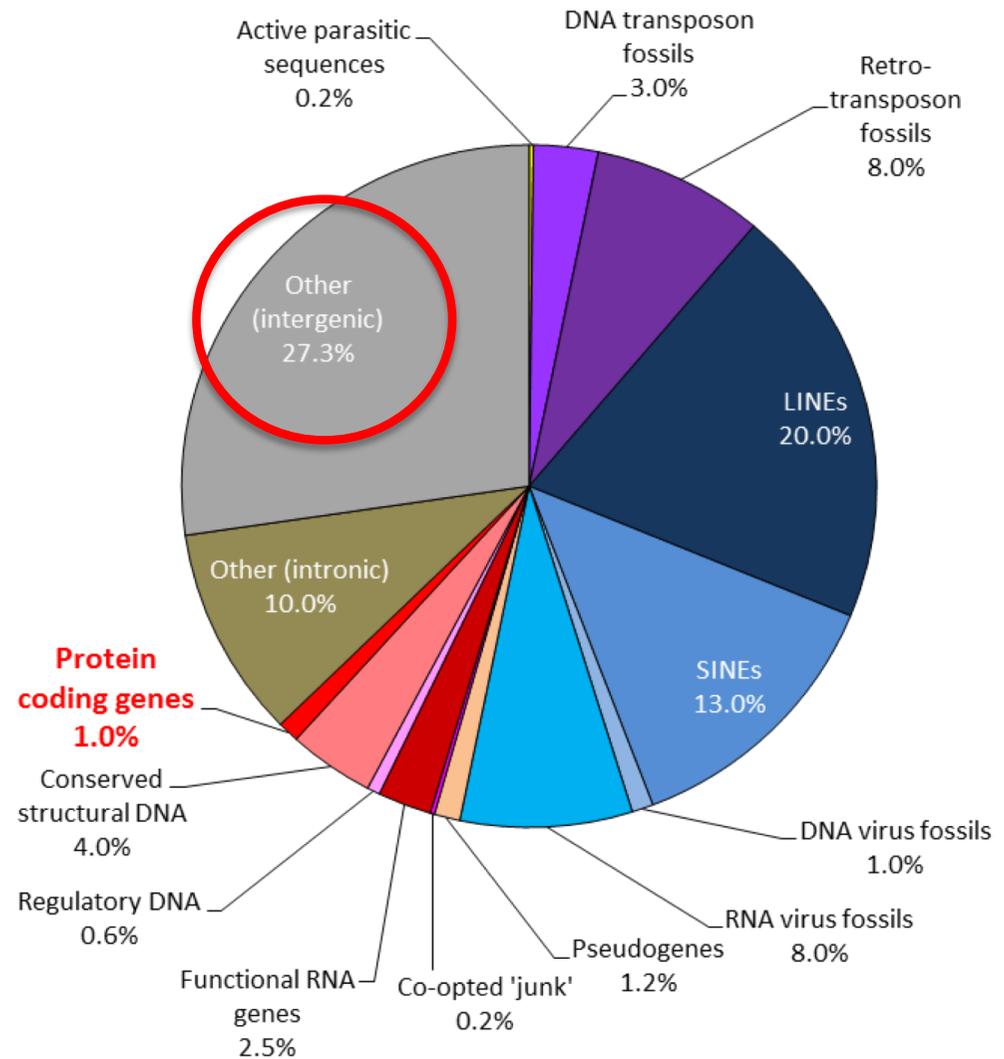


# 98% OF THE HUMAN GENOMIC DNA DOES NOT ENCODE FOR PROTEINS

ca 50% transposable elements

1-2% protein coding genes

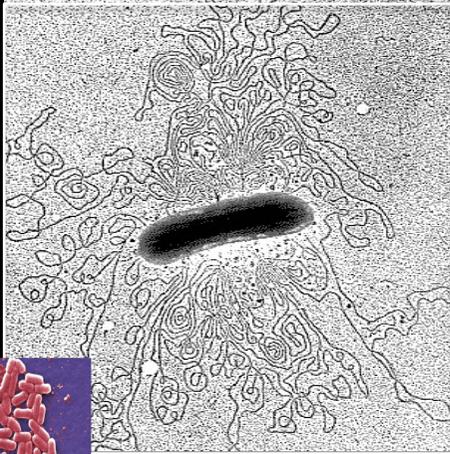
0.5-1% pseudogenes



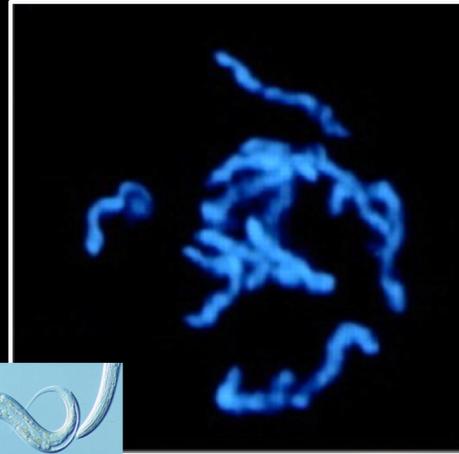
→ Vast genome sequences without biological functions?

# The C-value and G-value paradox

*E. coli*



*C. elegans*



*H. sapiens*



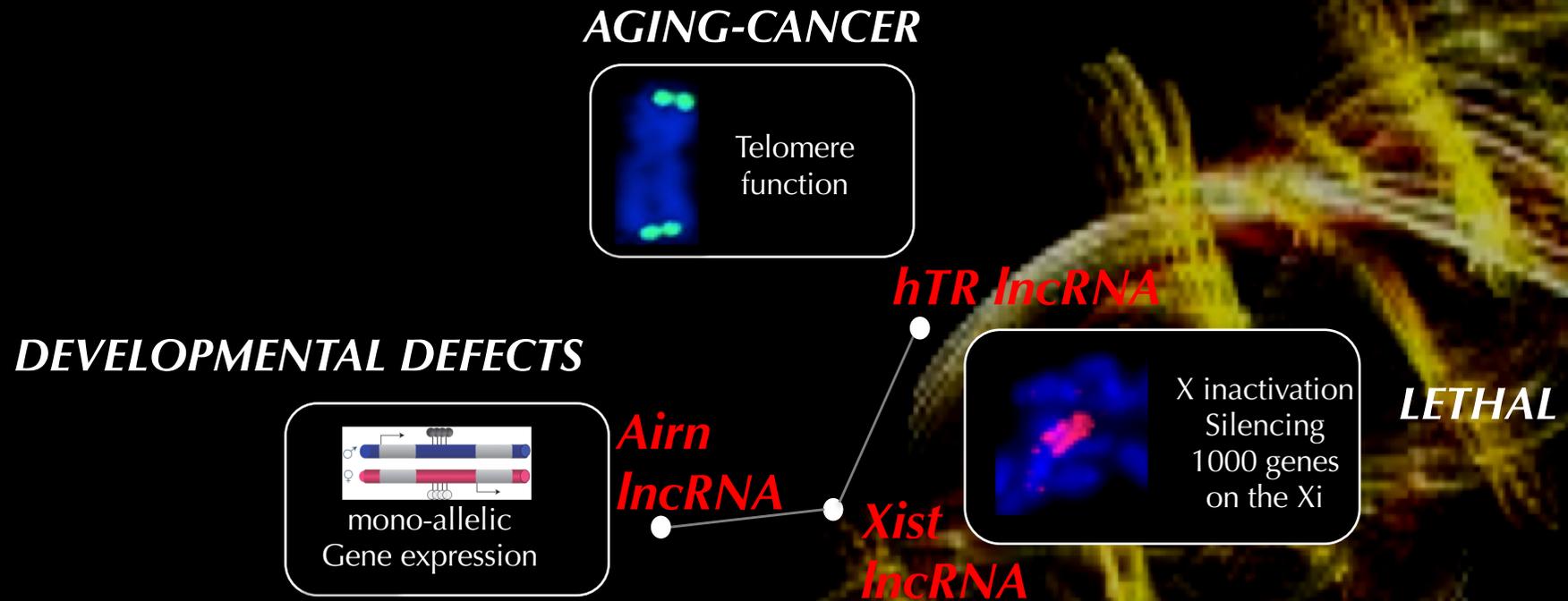
Genome	5x10 <sup>6</sup> bp	1x10 <sup>8</sup> bp	3x10 <sup>9</sup> bp
Chromosomes	1	6	23
Coding genes	<b>6692</b>	<b>20541</b>	<b>21995</b>
ncDNA	5%	60%	98%

Disconnection of biological complexity and genome size:

- G-value paradox: number of genes does not correlate with genome size
- C-Value paradox: the amount of DNA in a haploid genome (the 1C value) does correspond strongly to the complexity of an organism.

**ncDNA CONTENT INCREASES WITH ORGANISMAL COMPLEXITY**

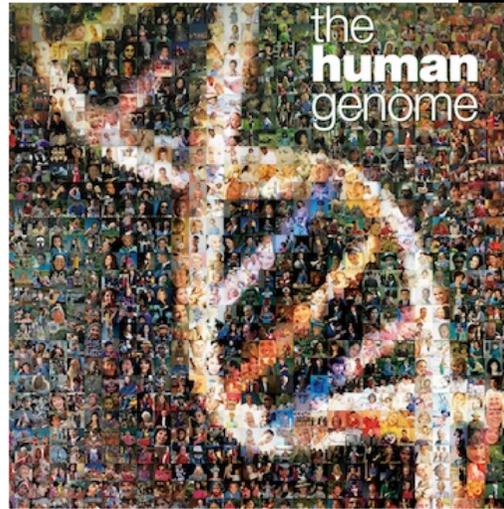
# Early examples of "exotic" functional ncRNAs



Relevant for development and disease  
...others?

# Imagine you live in 2000.....

and you ask yourself a question:



...what can be done to **identify** new classes of RNAs that origin from non-coding regions and carry biological function

...what techniques to you apply

...are there techniques/instruments that can help in this quest?

**Form 5 groups - 10 minutes discussion; 2 persons present ideas**

## Classic automated sanger sequencing approaches are not sufficient to capture transcriptome complexity

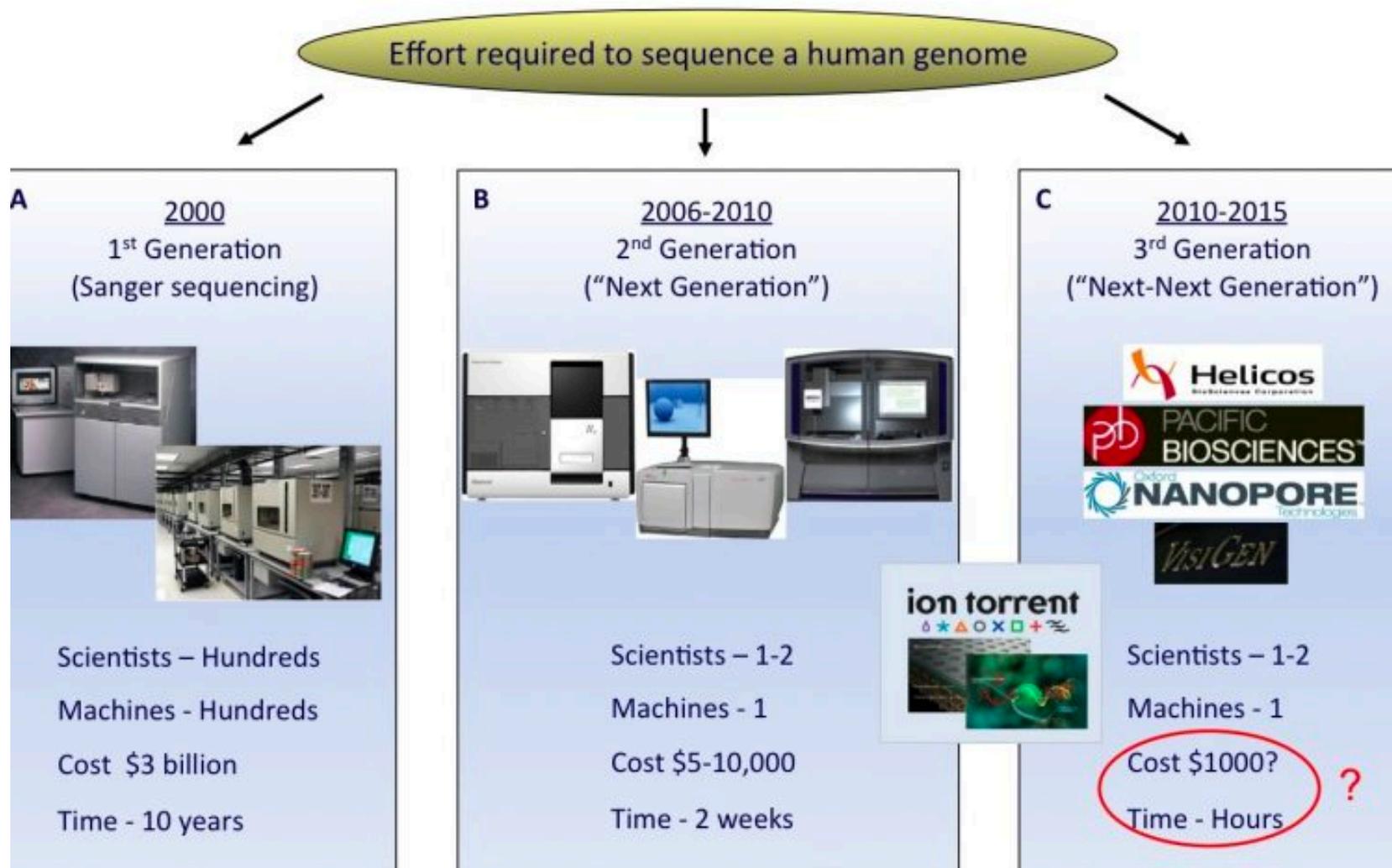
**What are the problems in the use of classic DNA sequencing techniques in the discovery of new functional elements (RNAs) in eukaryotes???????**

- Slow
- Cost intensive
- Labor intensive
- Biased towards highly expressed transcripts
- Non productive for sequencing of larger genomes/transcriptomes
- Sequencing sample preparation for genome studies is labour intensive
- Combined, multiple analyses of particular sample is almost impossible (transcriptome and epigenome)

**What type of methods do we need to get a better resolution of the eukaryotic genome????**

- Fast method
- Cheap methods
- Efficient and reproducible methods
- Excellent detection of low abundance targets (low expressed RNAs)
- Multiple coverage of target with sequence reads
- Sequencing sample preparation also from limited source (small cell populations)
- Combined, multiple analyses of particular sample (transcriptome and epigenome) to link biological information

# A short wrap-up on sequencing techniques



2022: RNA seq: €400  
2022: ChIP seq: €500  
2023: RNA seq: €300  
2023: ChIP seq: €350

...one vial of restriction enzyme: € 250

### 3. Massive Parallel Sequencing – a revolution in genome sequencing

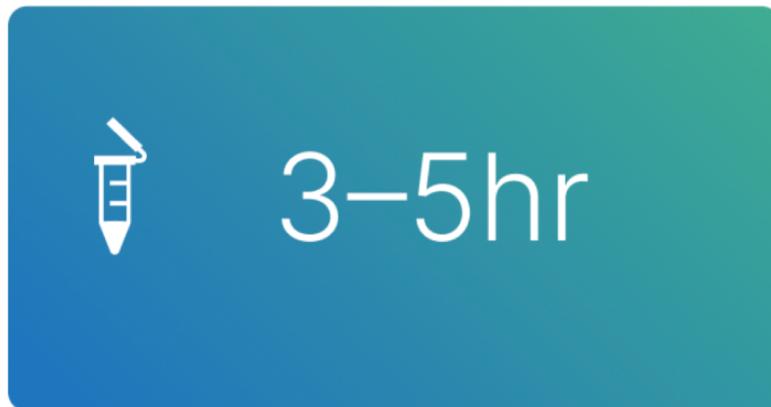
Output:

up to 6 Tb and 20 billion sequence reads in < 2 days.

typically 30-100 fold coverage

(each nucleotide in the sequenced DNA is represented by 30 – 100 sequence reads)

Prep



Sequence



**Data analysis:**

**Limiting factor: trained personnel, equipment and biological interpretation of the sequencing data**

**Experimental conditions and models systems need to be chosen carefully**

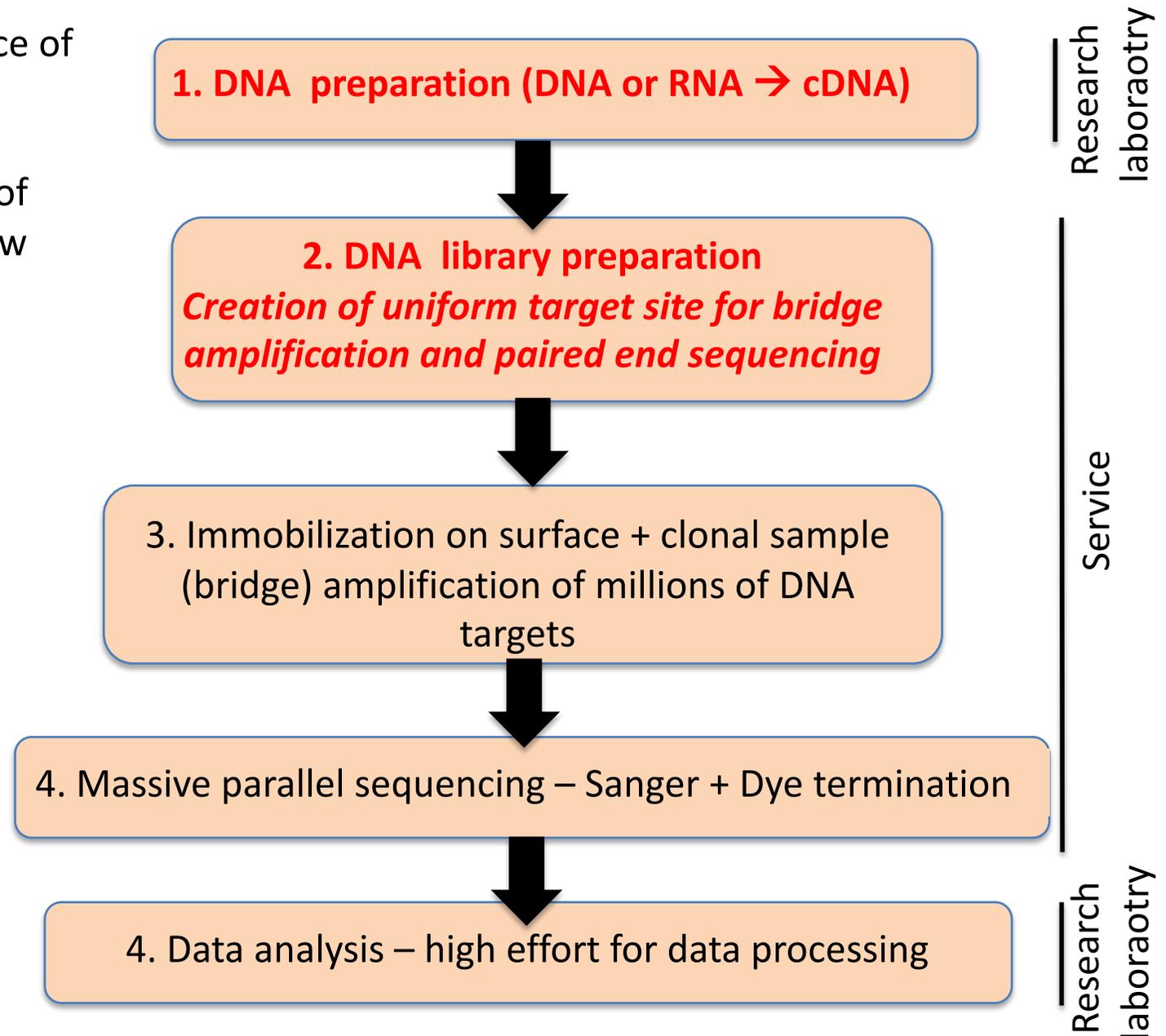
### 3. Massive Parallel Sequencing – how does it work?

**DNA seq** – genome sequence of many organisms

**RNA seq** – all RNAs (cDNA) of many organisms – also at low abundance

**ChIP seq**

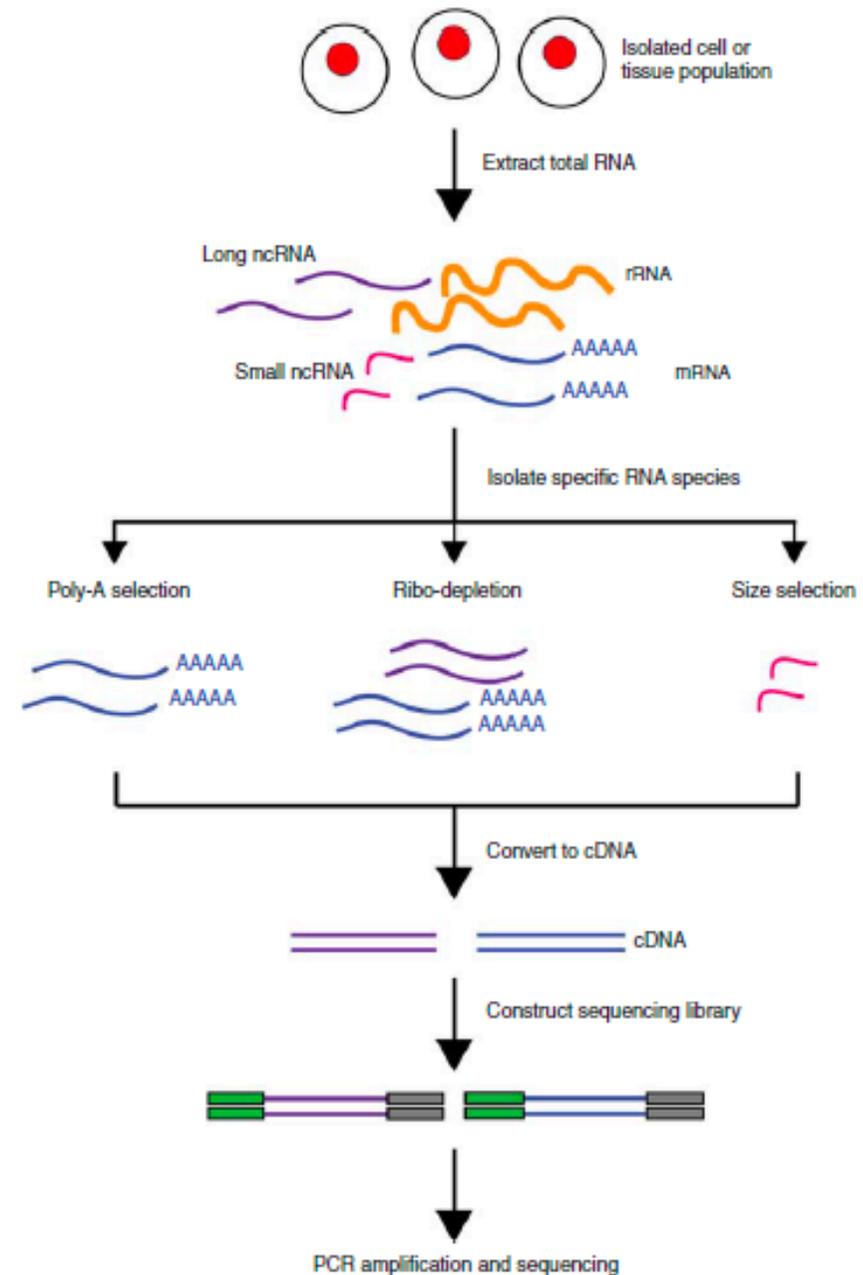
**ATAC** Assay for Transposase-Accessible Chromatin using sequencing.....



## 3b Illumina: massive parallel sequencing: RNA seq

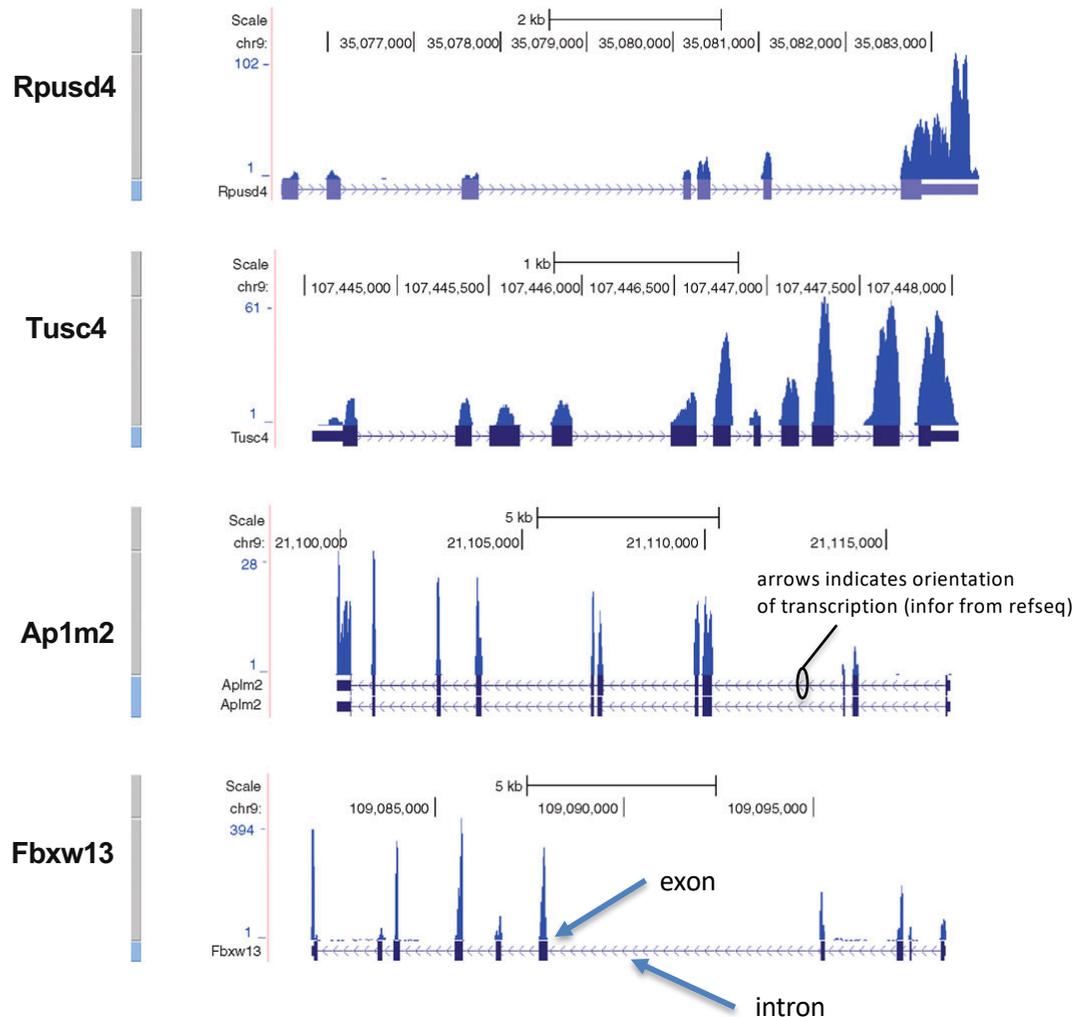
RNA seq allows the sequencing of different classes of RNA

1. Selection of cell type/tissue/organism
2. Fractionation of RNA types
3. cDNA synthesis and end polishing
4. Adapter ligation  
(sequencing primer target site)
5. PCR amplification
6. Cluster amplification and sequencing in flow cell



# Coverage blot of typical RNA seq experiment

Zoom into defined region in the genome of protein coding genes



Coverage plots of RNA-Seq reads from a single wild-type mature oocyte. Analysis was performed using the UCSC genome browser. Depicted here are the base coverage files for Rpusd4, Tusc4, Ap1m2 and Fbxw13 on chromosome 9.

Sequence reads build up to peak

Peaks build up on exonic sequences in reference genome

No peaks on intronic sequences (degraded RNA)

## Qualitative Information

The start and end of a peak allows to identify a defined (mature) RNA unit with respect to the reference sequence (i.e. exon: start and end point) (i.e. miRNA: start and end of processed miRNA)

## Quantitative information

Computational analysis of sequencing data allows to Correlate coverage blot of individual transcripts to gene expression levels

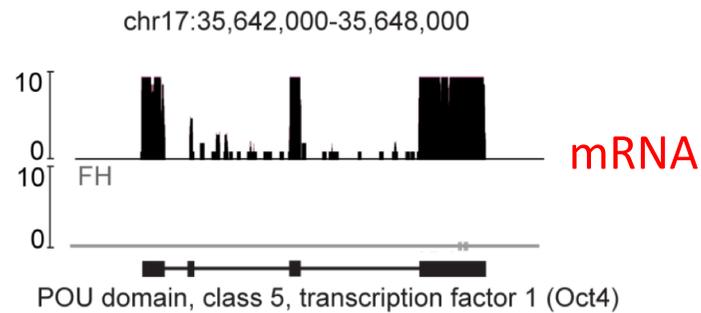
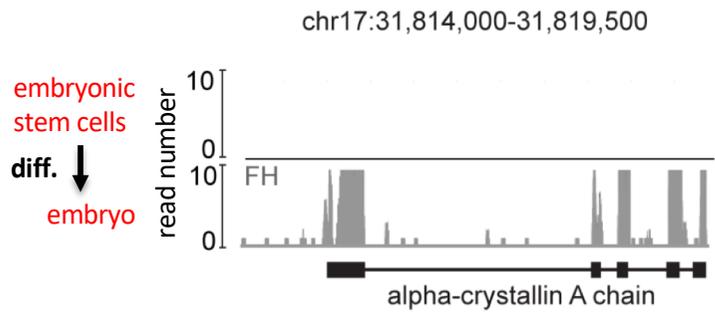
## Tissue specific expression

RNAseq in different tissues, cell types or differentiation (differential processing, expression)

RNAseq in different species (conservation)

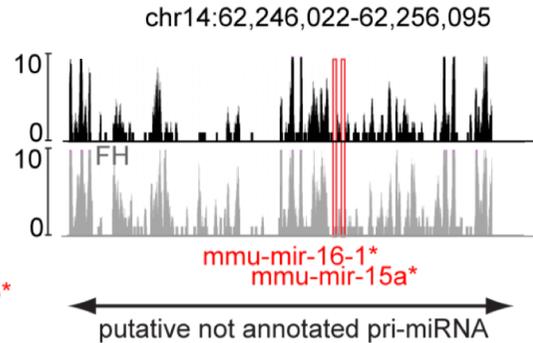
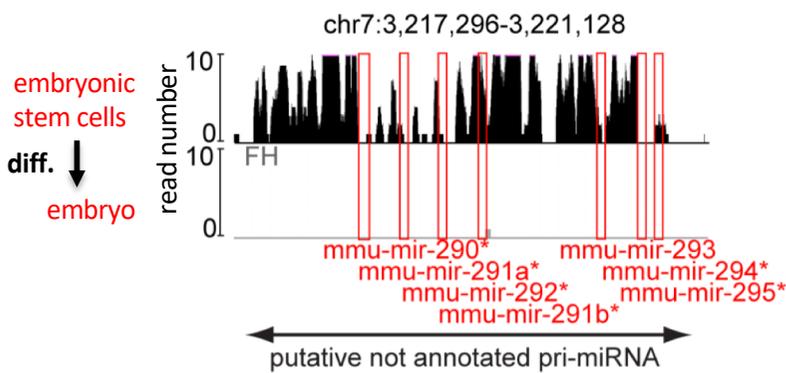
Single cell information

# Non-coding RNAs are complex in their expression and processing into mature ncRNA



**Alpha crystallin A chain:**  
expressed in embryo not ES cells,  
clear exon intron structure  
no other significant reads

**Oct4:**  
expressed in ES cells,  
clear exon intron structure  
no other significant reads



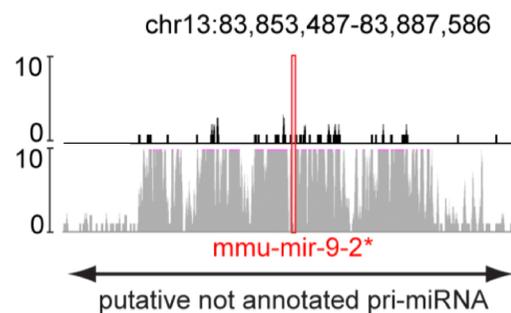
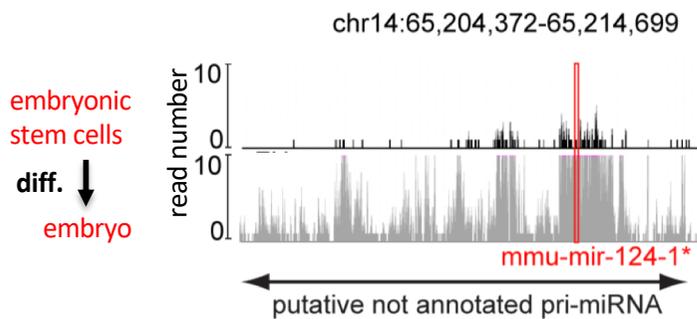
Long  
Non-  
coding  
RNA

**Non-coding pri-miRNAs**  
Reads map along a longer  
stretch on Chr7/14

Chr7 lncRNA: differential  
regulation of expression

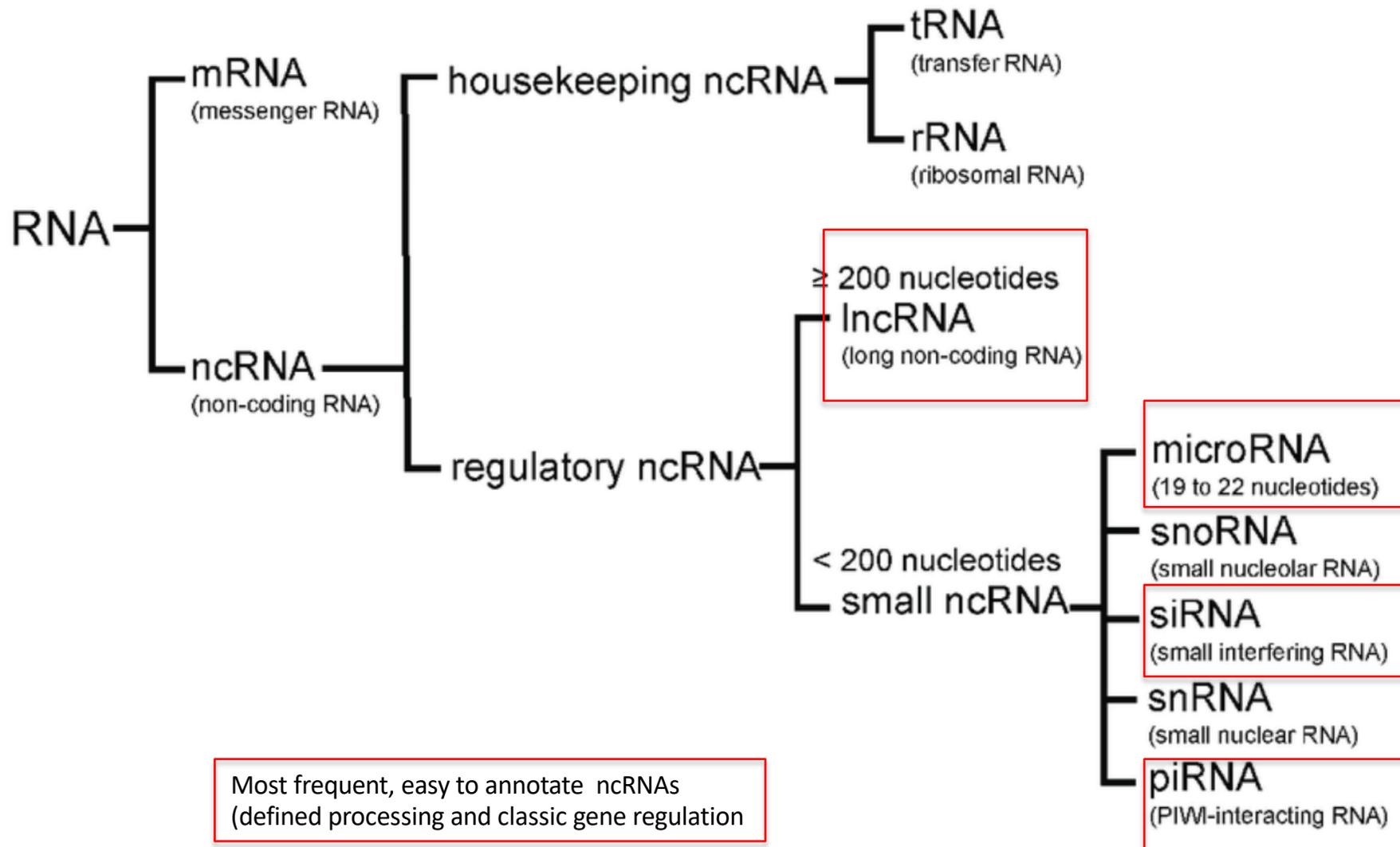
Chr14 lncRNA: common  
expression

Annotation with miRNAs  
(processing known)



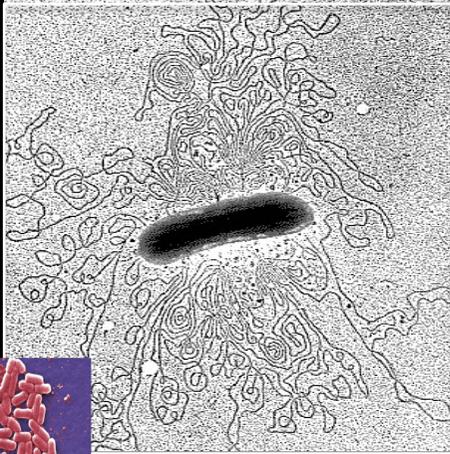


# RNA Seq identifies new type of RNA elements

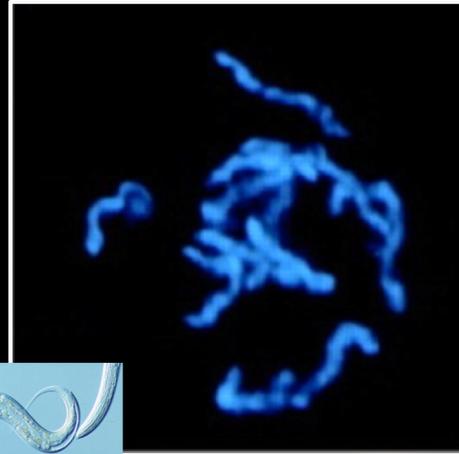


# The non-coding genome (r)evolution

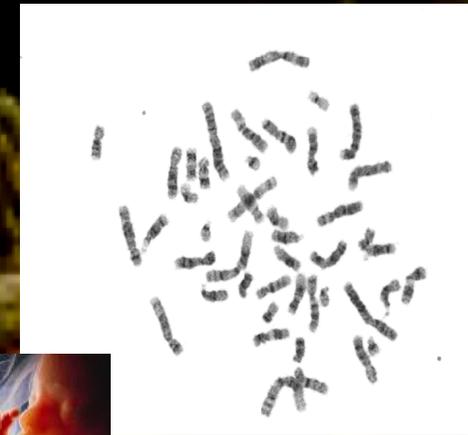
*E. coli*



*C. elegans*

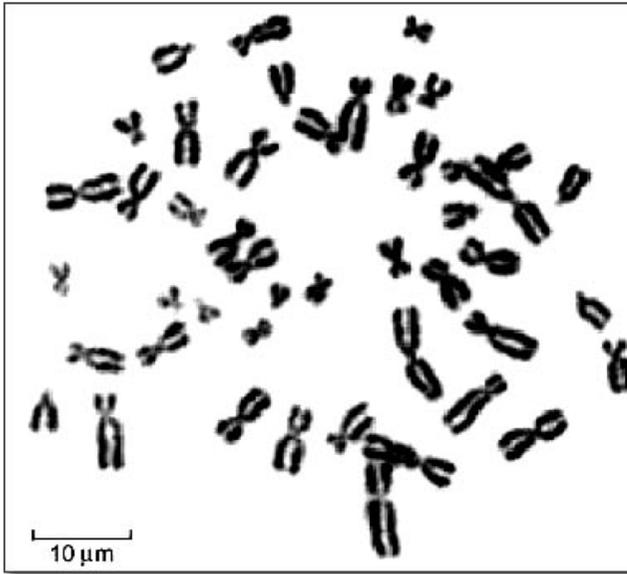


*H. sapiens*



	Genome	$5 \times 10^6$ bp	$1 \times 10^8$ bp	$3 \times 10^9$ bp
Chromosomes		1	6	23
Coding genes		6692	20541	21995
ncDNA		5%	60%	<b>98%</b>
non-coding RNA genes		15	23136	ca. 40000
miRNAs		0	224	4274
pseudogenes		21	1522	10616

# Almost all regions in the genome are subject to regulation and transcription – what about non-coding gene regulation?



The vast majority (80,4%) of the human genome is in at least one biochemical RNA event in at least one cell type

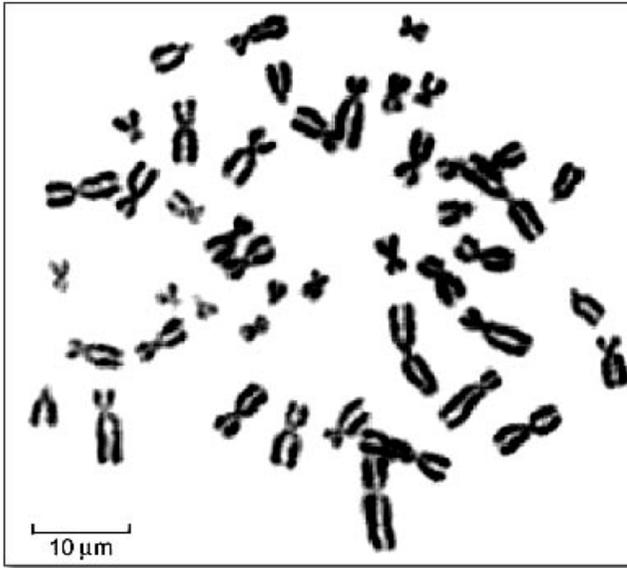
Coding transcripts are expressed at relatively high levels, Non-coding RNAs tend to be expressed at low levels

**How would you define a potential functionally relevant transcripts?**

**Can we use genomics data to propose functionally relevant transcripts? How?**

Think about 10 minutes and propose an idea!

# Almost all regions in the genome are subject to regulation and transcription



The vast majority (80.4%) of the human genome participates in at least one biochemical RNA and/or chromatin associated event in at least one cell type. Much of the genome lies close to a regulatory event: 95% of the genome lies within 8kb of a DNA-protein interaction (as assayed by bound ChIP-seq motifs or DNaseI footprints), and 99% is within 1.7kb of at least one of the biochemical events measured by ENCODE.

Classifying the genome into seven chromatin states suggests an initial set of 399,124 regions with enhancer-like features and 70,292 regions with promoter-like features, as well hundreds of thousands of quiescent regions. High-resolution analyses further subdivide the genome into thousands of narrow states with distinct functional properties.

It is possible to quantitatively correlate RNA sequence production and processing with both chromatin marks and transcription factor (TF) binding at promoters, indicating that promoter functionality can explain the majority of RNA expression variation.

Many non-coding variants in individual genome sequences lie in ENCODE-annotated functional regions; this number is at least as large as those that lie in protein coding genes.

SNPs associated with disease by GWAS are enriched within non-coding functional elements, with a majority residing in or near ENCODE-defined regions that are outside of protein coding genes. In many cases, the disease phenotypes can be associated with a specific cell type or TF.

**THIS FINDING SHOWS THAT COMPLEXITY GOES WIDE BEYOND PROTEIN CODING GENES  
THOUSANDS OF NEW GENES THAT HAVE NEVER BEEN STUDIED BEFORE**

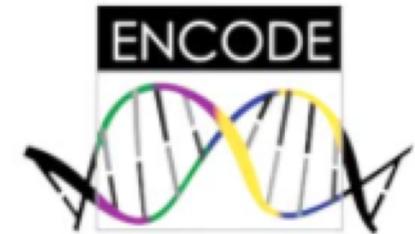


# The ENCODE PROJECT: IDENTIFICATION OF ALL FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE REMAINING 98% OF THE HUMAN GENOME (2003)

- Mapping transcription units
- Mapping regulatory units

The Encyclopedia of DNA Elements (ENCODE) is a public research project launched by the US National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) in September 2003.

**Intended as a follow-up to the Human Genome Project (Genomic Research), the ENCODE project aims to identify all functional elements in the human genome.**

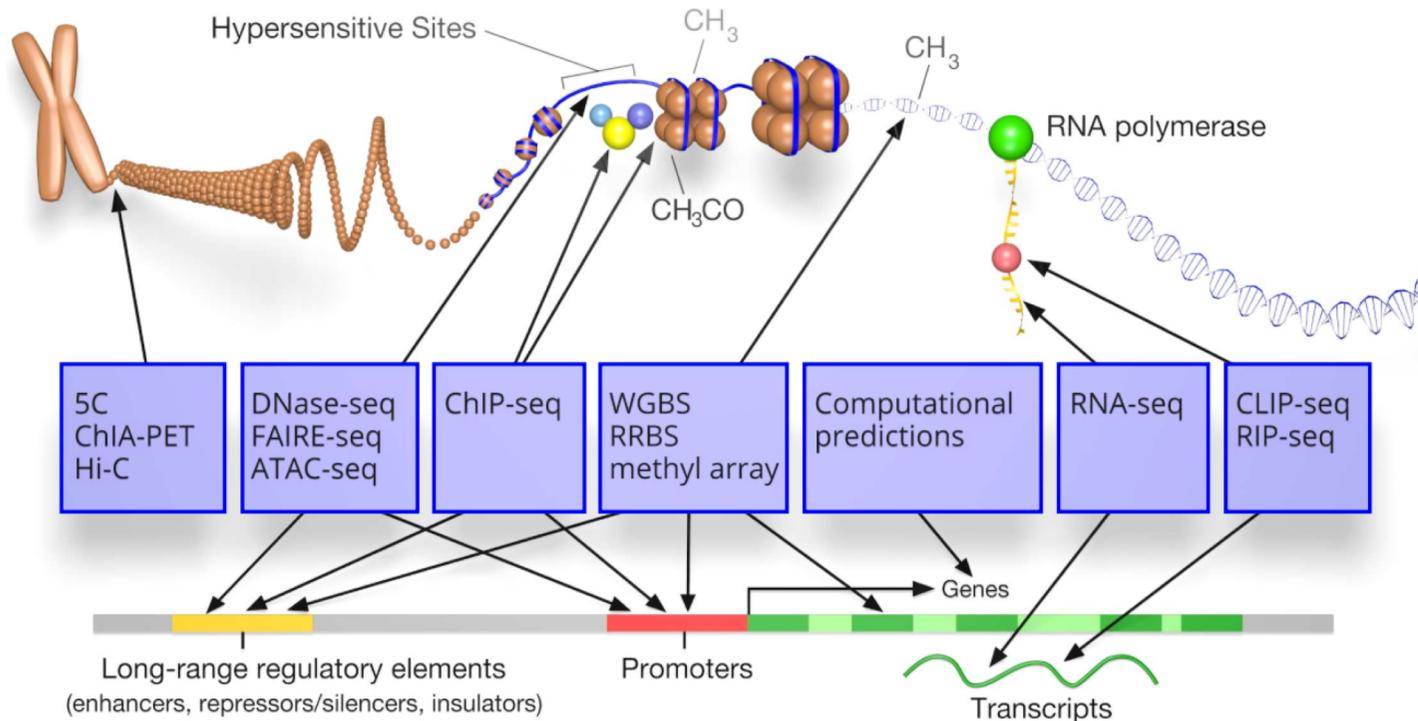


The project involves a worldwide consortium of research groups, and data generated from this project can be accessed through public databases.

ENCODE is implemented in three phases: the pilot phase, the technology development phase and the production phase.

Along the pilot phase, the ENCODE Consortium evaluated strategies for identifying various types of genomic elements. The goal of the pilot phase was to identify a set of procedures that, in combination, could be applied cost-effectively and at high-throughput to accurately and comprehensively characterize large regions of the human genome. The pilot phase had to reveal gaps in the current set of tools for detecting functional sequences, and was also thought to reveal whether some methods used by that time were inefficient or unsuitable for large-scale utilization. Some of these problems had to be addressed in the ENCODE technology development phase (being executed concurrently with the pilot phase), which aimed to devise new laboratory and computational methods that would improve our ability to identify known functional sequences or to discover new functional genomic elements. The results of the first two phases determined the best path forward for analysing the remaining 99% of the human genome in a cost-effective and comprehensive production phase.

# ENCODE: Encyclopedia of DNA Elements



The ENCODE (Encyclopedia of DNA Elements) Consortium is an international collaboration of research groups funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI). The goal of ENCODE is to build a comprehensive parts list of functional elements in the human genome, including elements that act at the protein and RNA levels, and regulatory elements that control cells and circumstances in which a gene is active.

[Get Started](#)



Based on an image by Darryl Leja (NHGRI), Ian Dunham (EBI), Michael Pazin (NHGRI)

- HUMAN
- MOUSE
- WORM
- FLY

<https://www.encodeproject.org>

# ENCODE MASSIVE EXPERIMENTAL INPUT

Ca.  
400 Mio \$

**Table 1 Summary of ENCODE experiments**

Experiment	Description
DNA methylation	In 82 human cell lines and tissues: A549, Adrenal gland, AG04449, AG04450, AG09309, AG09319, AG10803, AoSMC, BE2 C, BJ, Brain, Breast, Caco-2, CMK, ECC-1, Fibrobl, GM06990, GM12878, GM12891, GM12892, GM19239, GM19240, H1-hESC, HAEpiC, HCF, HCM, HCPEpiC, HCT-116, HEEpiC, HEK293, HeLa-S3, Hepatocytes, HepG2, HIPEpiC, HL-60, HMEC, HNPCEpiC, HPAEpiC, HRCEpiC, HRE, HRPEpiC, HSMM, HTR8svn, IMR90, Jurkat, K562, Kidney, Left Ventricle, Leukocyte, Liver, LNCaP, Lung, MCF-7, Melano, Myometr, NB4, NH-A, NHBE, NHDF-neo, NT2-D1, Osteoblasts, Ovcarr-3, PANC-1, Pancreas, PanIslets, Pericardium, PFSK-1, Placenta, PrEC, ProgFib, RPTEC, SAEC, Skeletal muscle, Skin, SkMC, SK-N-MC, SK-N-SH, Stomach, T-47D, Testis, U87, UCH-1 and Uterus
TF ChIP-seq	A total of 119 TFs: ATF3, BATF, BCLAF1, BCL3, BCL11A, BDP1, BHLHE40, BRCA1, BRF1, BRF2, CCNT2, CEBPB, CHD2, CTBP2, CTCF, CTCFL, EBF1, EGR1, ELF1, ELK4, EP300, ESRR, ESR1, ETS1, E2F1, E2F4, E2F6, FOS, FOSL1, FOSL2, FOXA1, FOXA2, GABPA, GATA1, GATA2, GATA3, GTF2B, GTF2F1, GTF3C2, HDAC2, HDAC8, HMG3, HNF4A, HNF4G, HSF1, IRF1, IRF3, IRF4, JUN, JUNB, JUND, MAFF, MAFK, MAX, MEF2A, MEF2C, MXI1, MYC, NANOG, NFE2, NFKB1, NFYA, NFYB, NRF1, NR2C2, NR3C1, PAX5, PBX3, POLR2A, POLR3A, POLR3G, POU2F2, POU5F1, PPARGC1A, PRDM1, RAD21, RDBP, REST, RFX5, RXRA, SETDB1, SIN3A, SIRT6, SIX5, SMARCA4, SMARCB1, SMARCC1, SMARCC2, SMC3, SPI1, SP1, SP2, SREBF1, SRF, STAT1, STAT2, STAT3, SUZ12, TAF1, TAF7, TAL1, TBP, TCF7L2, TCF12, TFAP2A, TFAP2C, THAP1, TRIM28, USF1, USF2, WRNIP1, YY1, ZBTB7A, ZBTB33, ZEB1, ZNF143, ZNF263, ZNF274 and ZZZ3
Histone ChIP-seq	A total of 12 types: H2A.Z, H3K4me1, H3K4me2, H3K4me3, H3K9ac, H3K9me1, H3K9me3, H3K27ac, H3K27me3, H3K36me3, H3K79me2 and H4K20me1
DNase-seq	In 125 cell types or treatments: 8988T, A549, AG04449, AG04450, AG09309, AG09319, AG10803, AoAF, AoSMC/serum_free_media, BE2_C, BJ, Caco-2, CD20, CD34, Chorion, CLL, CMK, Fibrobl, FibroP, Gliobla, GM06990, GM12864, GM12865, GM12878, GM12891, GM12892, GM18507, GM19238, GM19239, GM19240, H7-hESC, H9ES, HAc, HAEpiC, HA-h, HA-sp, HBMEC, HCF, HCFaa, HCM, HConF, HCPEpiC, HCT-116, HEEpiC, HeLa-S3, HeLa-S3_IFNa4h, Hepatocytes, HepG2, HESC, HFF, HFF-Myc, HGF, HIPEpiC, HL-60, HMEC, HMF, HMVEC-dAd, HMVEC-dBI-Ad, HMVEC-dBI-Neo, HMVEC-dLy-Ad, HMVEC-dLy-Neo, HMVEC-dNeo, HMVEC-LBI, HMVEC-LLy, HNPCEpiC, HPAEC, HPAF, HPDE6-E6E7, HPdLF, HPF, HRCEpiC, HRE, HRGEC, HRPEpiC, HSMM, HSMMemb, HSMMtube, HTR8svn, Huh-7, Huh-7.5, HUVEC, HVMF, iPS, Ishikawa_Estr, Ishikawa_Tamox, Jurkat, K562, LNCaP, LNCaP_Andr, MCF-7, MCF-7_Hypox, Medullo, Melano, MonocytesCD14+, Myometr, NB4, NH-A, NHDF-Ad, NHDF-neo, NHEK, NHLF, NT2-D1, Osteobl, PANC-1, PanIsletD, PanIslets, pHTE, PrEC, ProgFib, PrEC, RPTEC, RWPE1, SAEC, SKMC, SK-N-MC, SK-N-SH_RA, Stellate, T-47D, Th0, Th1, Th2, Urothelia, Urothelia_UT189, WERI-Rb-1, WI-38 and WI-38_Tamox
DNase footprint	In 41 cell types: AG10803, AoAF, CD20+, CD34+ Mobilized, fBrain, fHeart, fLung, GM06990, GM12865, HAEpiC, HA-h, HCF, HCM, HCPEpiC, HEEpiC, HepG2, H7-hESC, HFF, HIPEpiC, HMF, HMVEC-dBI-Ad, HMVEC-dBI-Neo, HMVEC-dLy-Neo, HMVEC-LLy, HPAF, HPdLF, HPF, HRCEpiC, HSMM, Th1, HVMF, IMR90, K562, NB4, NH-A, NHDF-Ad, NHDF-neo, NHLF, SAEC, SkMC and SK-N-SH RA
MNase-seq	In GM12878 and K562
3C-carbon copy (5C)	In GM12878, K562, HeLa-S3 and H1-hESC
GWAS SNP targeting	296 noncoding GWAS SNPs were assigned a target promoter

[GENCODE](#)[Data](#)[Stats](#)[Browser](#)[Blog](#)

## GENCODE:

Project that uses ENCODE data for the annotation of functional elements in the genome

<http://www.gencodegenes.org/>

### Statistics about all Human GENCODE releases

\* The statistics derive from the gtf files that contain only the annotation of the main chromosomes.

For details about the calculation of these statistics please see the [README\\_stats.txt](#) file.

Version 23 (March 2015 freeze, GRCh38) - Ensembl 81, 82

[Download release](#)

#### General stats

Total No of Genes	60498	Total No of Transcripts	198619
Protein-coding genes	19797	Protein-coding transcripts	79795
Long non-coding RNA genes	15931	- full length protein-coding:	54775
Small non-coding RNA genes	9882	- partial length protein-coding:	25020
Pseudogenes	14477	Nonsense mediated decay transcripts	13307
- processed pseudogenes:	10727	Long non-coding RNA loci transcripts	27817
- unprocessed pseudogenes:	3271		
- unitary pseudogenes:	172		
- polymorphic pseudogenes:	59		
- pseudogenes:	21	Total No of distinct translations	59774
Immunoglobulin/T-cell receptor gene segments		Genes that have more than one distinct translations	13556
- protein coding segments:	411		
- pseudogenes:	227		

## HOME WORK:

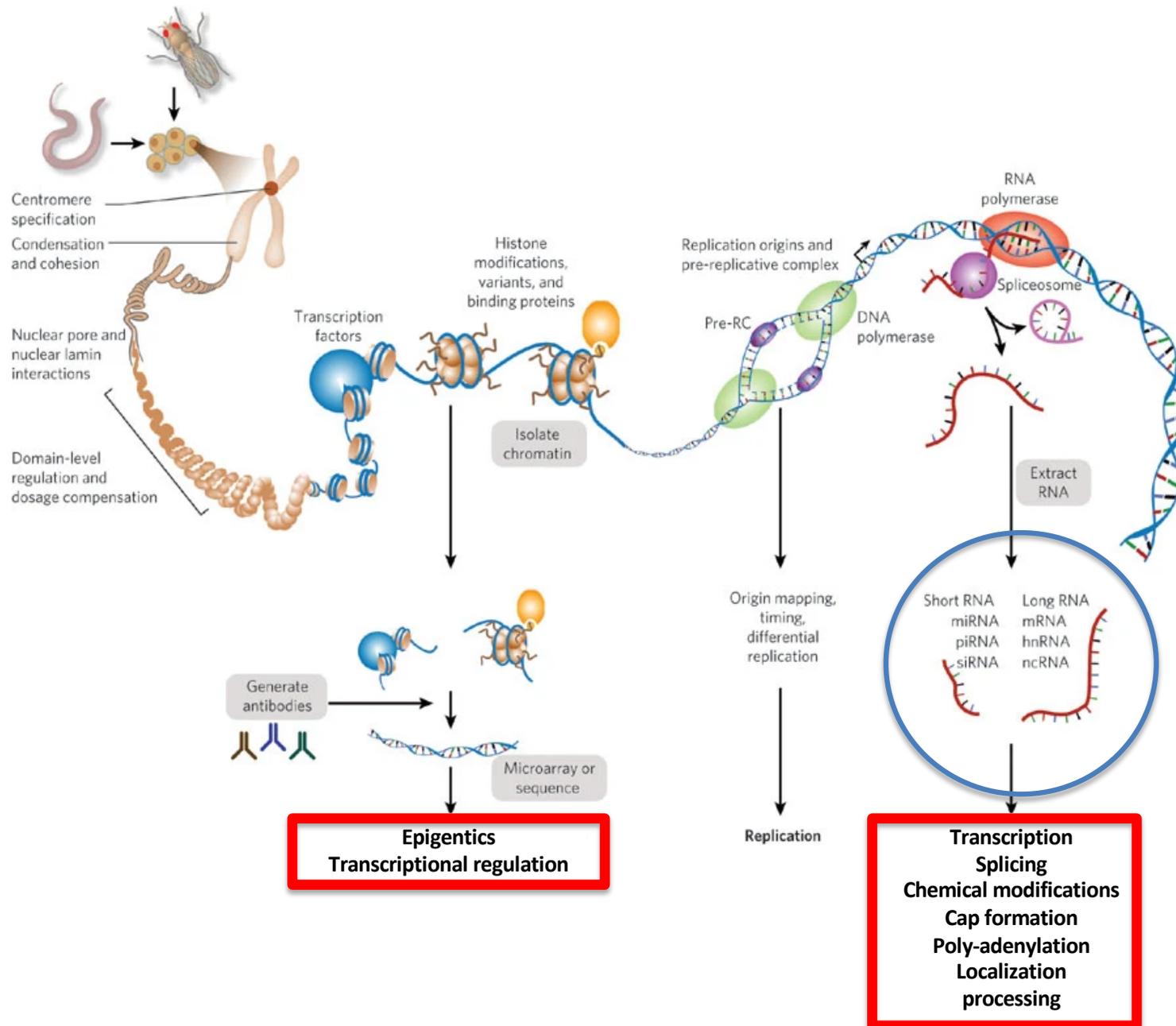
Use the **UCSC genome browser** ( <https://genome.ucsc.edu/index.html>) to check coding and ncRNA expression in a Hox gene cluster

- Select human genome,
- check for HOXC9 gene region (use zoom in and out function to visualize a genome region of ca. 100kb up and 100 kb downstream of HOXC9
- 1. Get an imagination on how many coding and non coding genes are in this region
- Go to tool selection: select CpG Island function; select ENCODE regulation
- Click on gray bar next to CHIP peaks; click integrated regulation from encode tracks; select "transcription, layered H3K4Me1, layered H3K4Me3, layered H3K27", select "submit"
- 2. Try to individuate peaks in CHIP data that have a particular pattern with respect to transcripts
- Be ready to show next lecture!!





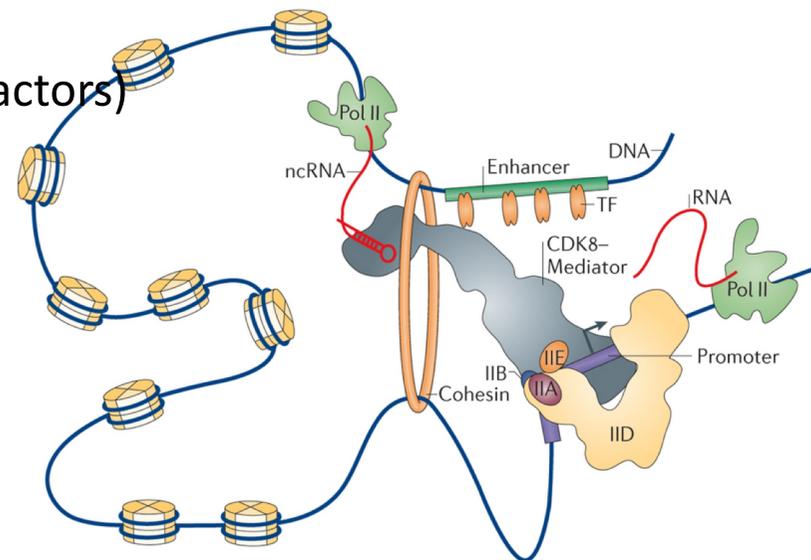
# How to unlock the genome and identify new functional elements ??



## HOW CAN NEW FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS - (GENES/TRANSCRIPTS) BE IDENTIFIED?

1. DNA Sequencing (Human genome project, DNA-Seq) → ALREADY DONE
2. Landscape of transcription: Sequencing of RNA (total RNA, small/large RNA, **CAGE**)
  - Determine the transcriptome of a give cell or cell type (**bulk RNA sequencing**)
  - Determine the initiation site of transcription → identify the expected position of regulatory elements (promoter, CpG islands, modified histones): **CAGE**
3. DNA methylation: High representation reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS)
4. Local chromatin structure:
  - determination of DNaseI hypersensitivity (Dnase Seq)
  - nucleosome occupancy (MNase-seq)
  - ChIP-seq (chromatin modifications, transcription factors)
  - 3 Dimensional space interaction

**THE ACQUISITION OF MECHANISMS OF GENE REGUALTION IS A STRONG INDICATOR FOR FUNCTIONAL RELEVANCE OF *lncRNAs***



## 2. Landscape of transcription: CAGE (Cap Analysis of Gene Expression)

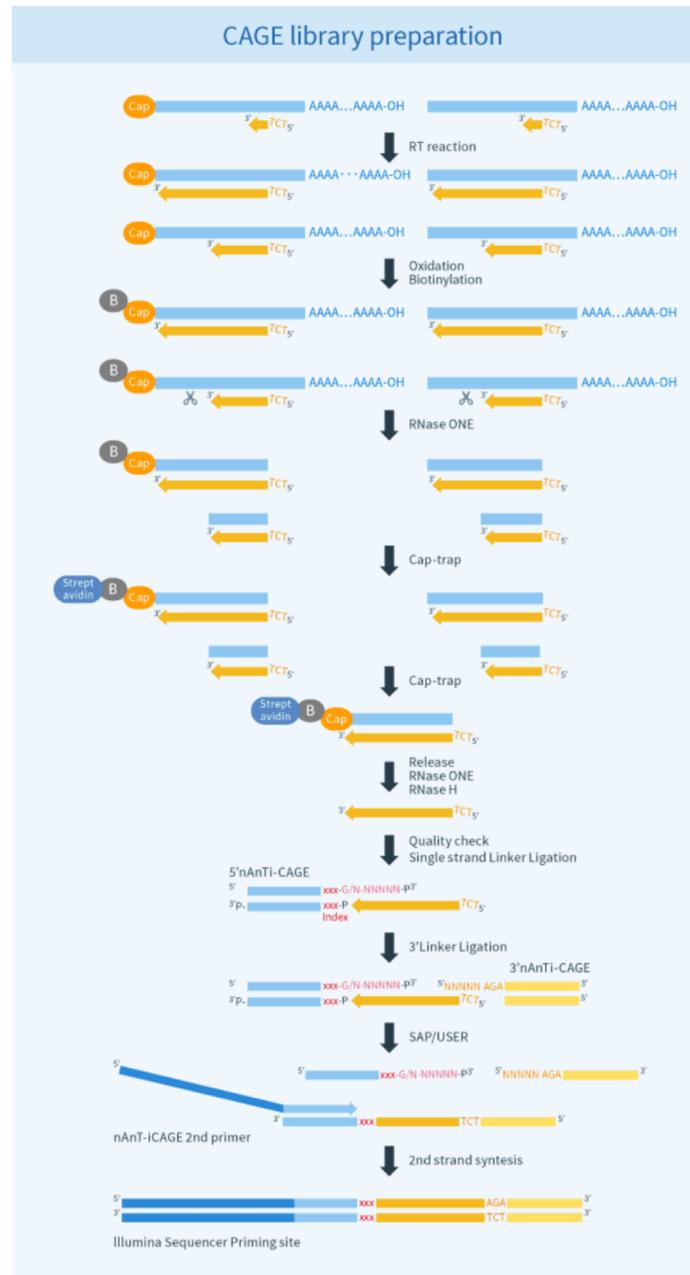
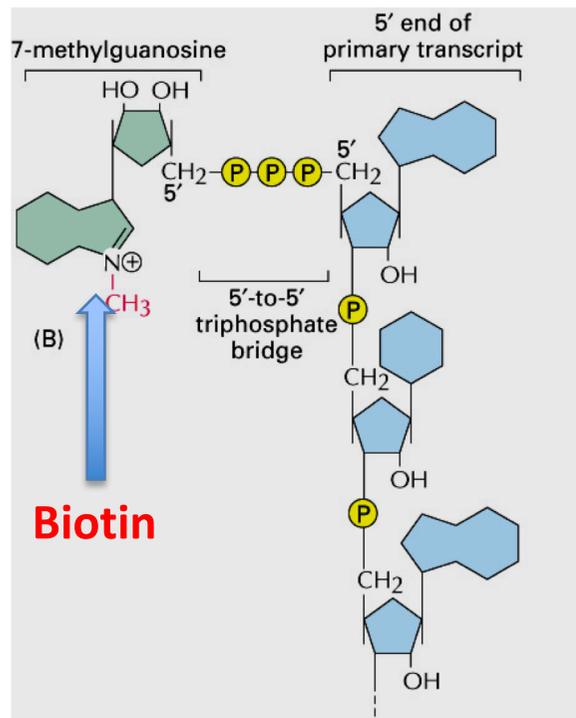
### Identifying transcriptional start sites

Mapping 5' end of transcripts

Getting information on localization of regulatory region

Limited to RNA polymerase II transcripts

Unlike a similar technique Serial Analysis of Gene Expression (SAGE, superSAGE) in which tags come from other parts of transcripts, CAGE is primarily used to locate an exact transcription start sites in the genome. This knowledge in turn allows a researcher to investigate promoter structure necessary for gene expression.



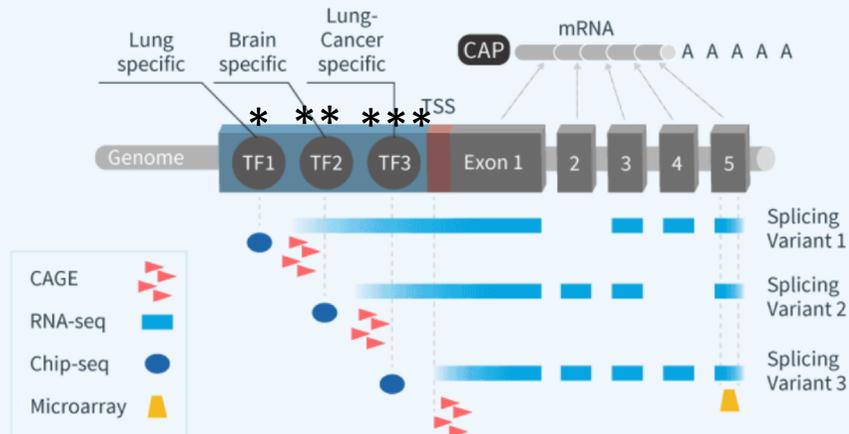
## 2. Landscape of transcription: CAGE (Cap Analysis of Gene Expression)

### Sequencing, Visualization & Analysis of data

#### Expression Profiling



#### Comparison among major gene expression analysis techniques



*RNAseq is «focussed» on 5' end of transcripts → only type of RNAs represented in library*

- \* Tissue specific promoter 1
- \*\* Tissue specific promoter 2
- \*\*\* Tissue specific promoter 3

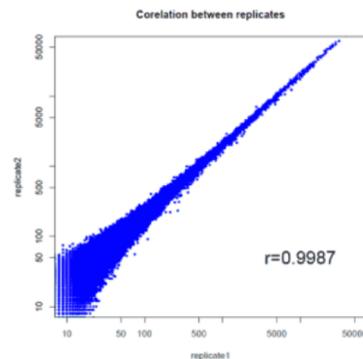
CAGE seq identifies 5' end of RNA and promoter regions

Identification of transcript variants of gene in a single cell type with different promoters

Information on tissue specific gene regulation

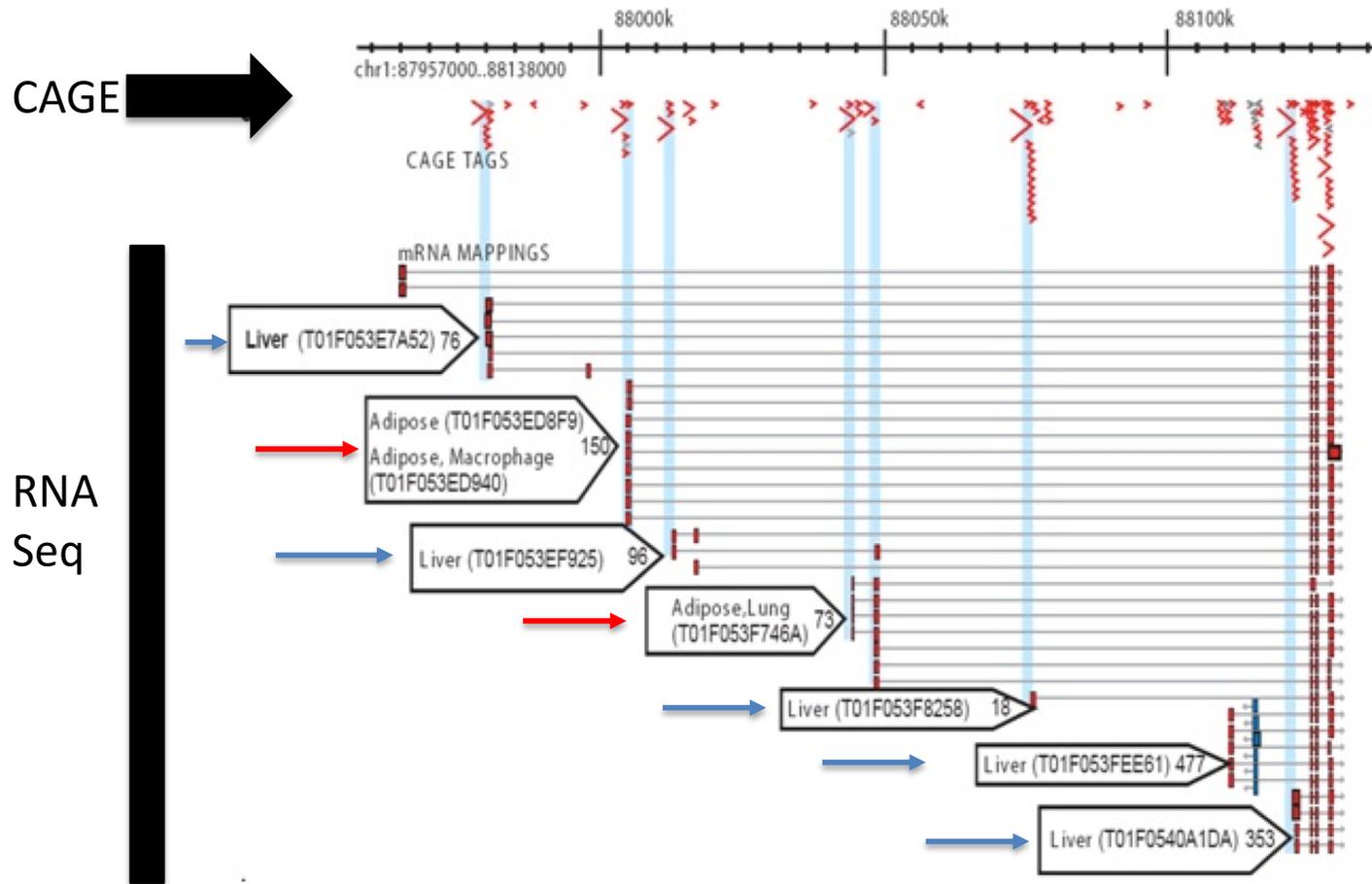
Note: classic RNA seq provides information on “body” of transcript (length, alternative splicing, expression levels)

#### High reproducibility



## 2. Landscape of transcription: CAGE (Cap Analysis of Gene Expression)

An example:



Reads from CAGE and RNAseq experiments

*RNA seq: can only detect aligned transcripts without detailed information on TSS.*

*CAGE: Excellent tool to identify Transcriptional start sites*

*Liver: same mRNA encoding gene, transcript variants with different start sites*

*In particular for non-coding genes That do not provide additional information from RNA sequence (i.e. triplete code for translation)*

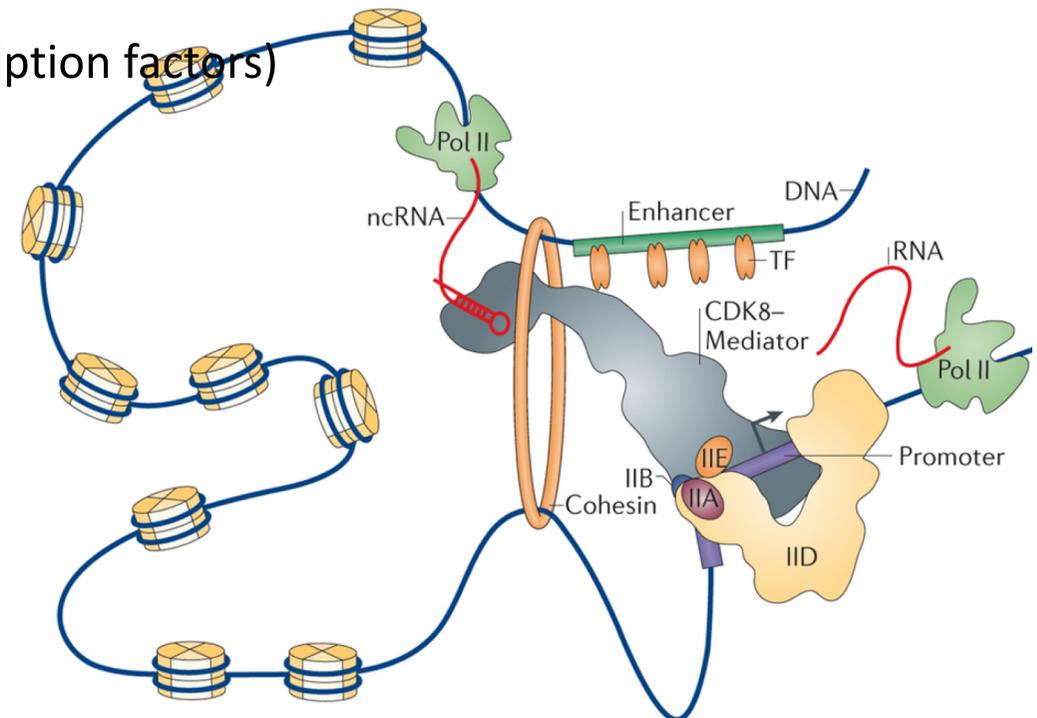
*Help to identify up-stream regulatory sequences = PROMOTERS RELEVANT CpG*

**Identification of 5' end is essential: gives information on the position of a putative promoter**

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  - 3 Dimensional space interaction

**THE ACQUISITION OF MECHANISMS OF GENE REGULATION IS A STRONG INDICATOR FOR FUNCTIONAL RELEVANCE OF lncRNAs**

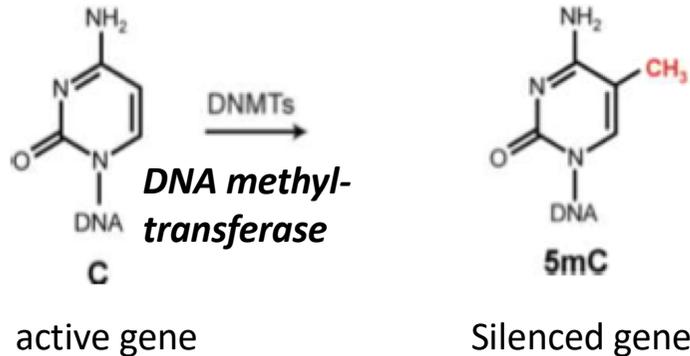


### 3. DNA methylation: reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS)

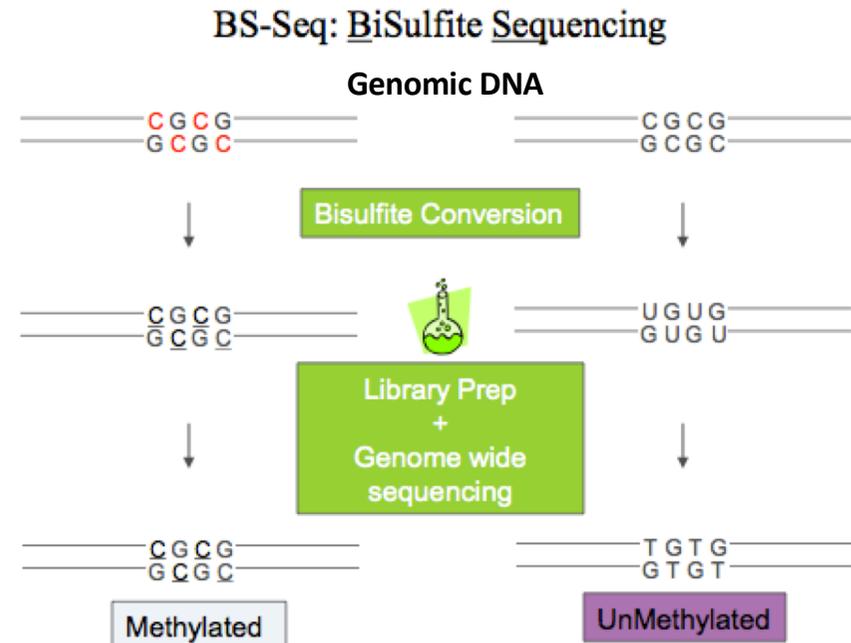
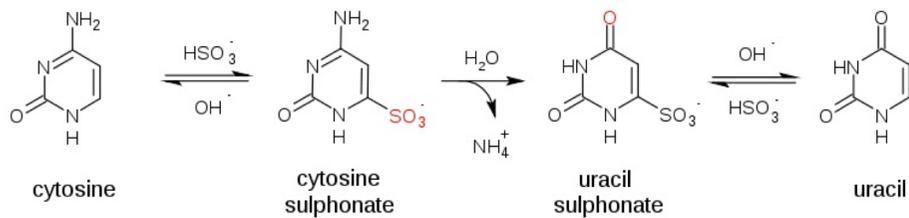
#### Identifying CpG islands

- Identifying information that control gene expression

Methylation of cytosine at CpG dinucleotides is an important epigenetic regulatory modification in many eukaryotic genomes.

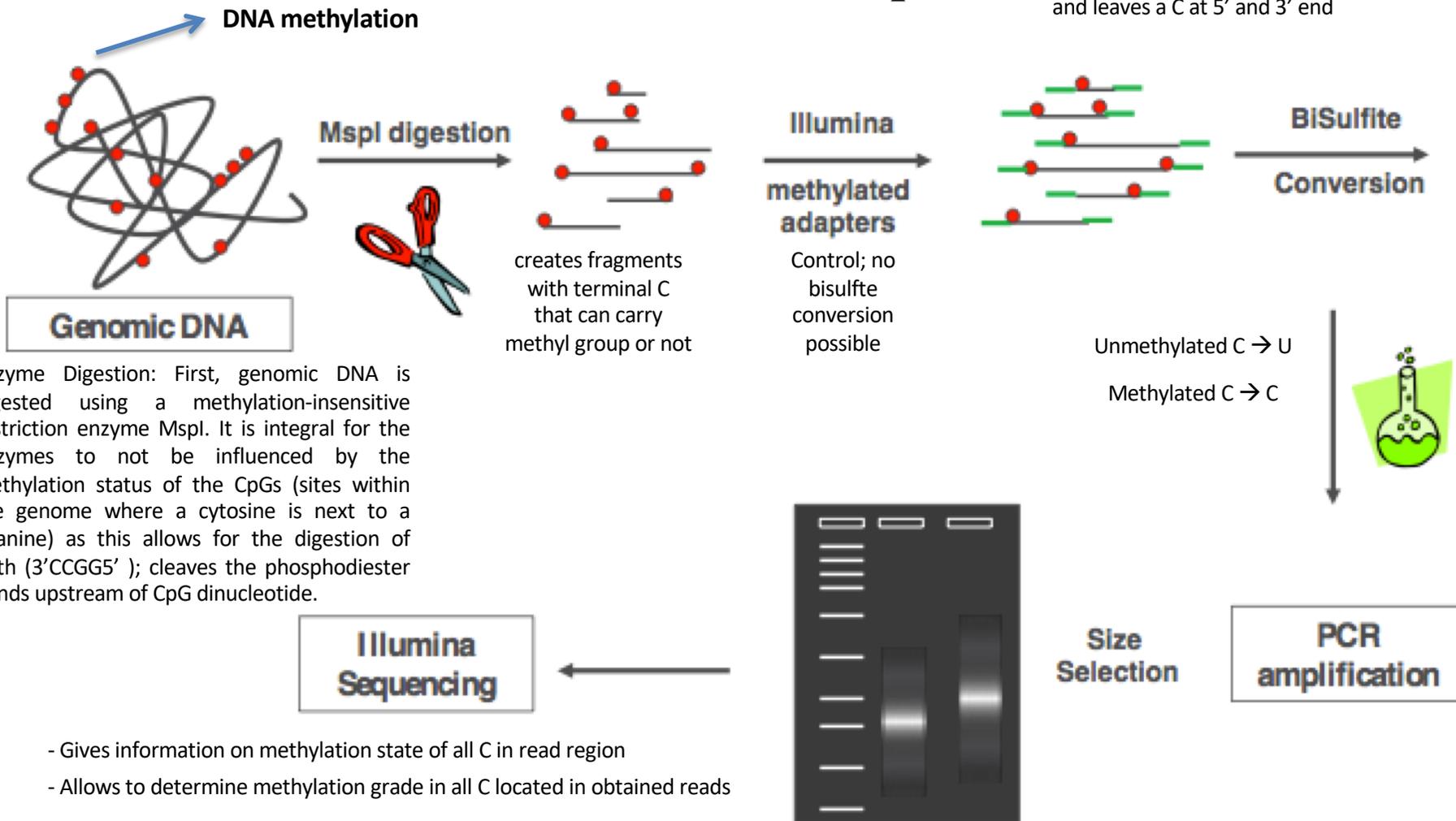
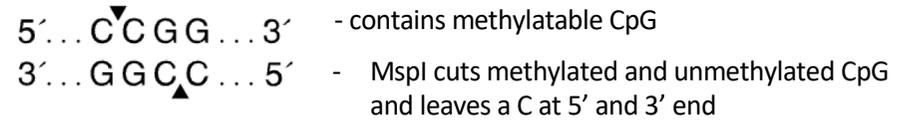


- **Bi-sulfite conversion: C→U conversion by sodium bisulfite treatment**



### 3. DNA methylation: Reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS)

Reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS) is an efficient and high-throughput technique used to analyze the genome-wide methylation profiles on a single nucleotide level. This technique combines restriction enzymes and bisulfite sequencing in order to enrich for the areas of the genome that have a high CpG content. Due to the high cost and depth of sequencing needed to analyze methylation status in the entire genome. The fragments that comprise the reduced genome **still include the majority of promoters, as well as regions such as repeated sequences that are difficult to profile using conventional bisulfite sequencing approaches.**

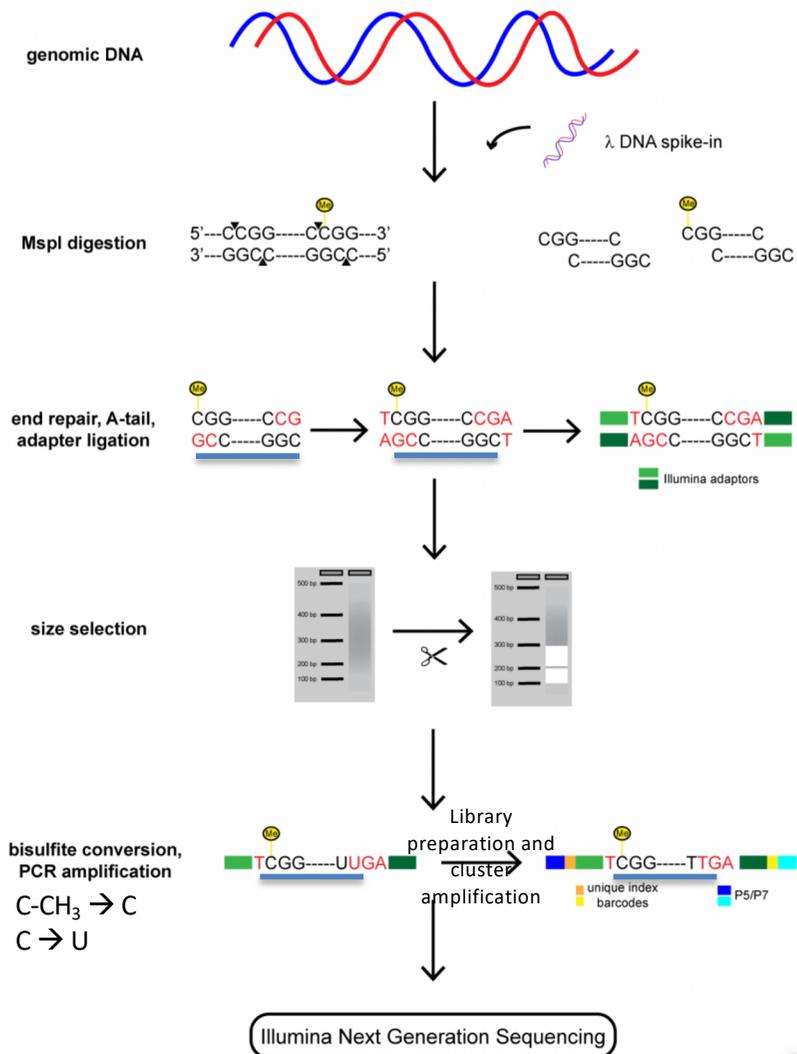


Enzyme Digestion: First, genomic DNA is digested using a methylation-insensitive restriction enzyme MspI. It is integral for the enzymes to not be influenced by the methylation status of the CpGs (sites within the genome where a cytosine is next to a guanine) as this allows for the digestion of both (3'CCGG5' ); cleaves the phosphodiester bonds upstream of CpG dinucleotide.

- Gives information on methylation state of all C in read region
- Allows to determine methylation grade in all C located in obtained reads

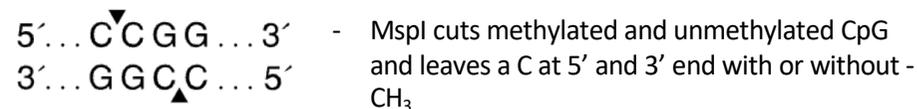
### 3. DNA methylation: Reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS)

Ideally 2 experimental conditions or 2 different biological samples (for example: WT and knock-out; ES cells and differentiated ES cells)



Mapping of reads against reference genome

Reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS) is an efficient and high-throughput technique used to analyze the genome-wide methylation profiles on a single nucleotide level. This technique combines restriction enzymes and bisulfite sequencing in order to enrich for the areas of the genome that have a high CpG content. Due to the high cost and depth of sequencing needed to analyze methylation status in the entire genome. The fragments that comprise the reduced genome **still include the majority of promoters, as well as regions such as repeated sequences that are difficult to profile using conventional bisulfite sequencing approaches.**



λ: Lambda DNA: prepared from methylation deficient bacteria (no CH<sub>3</sub> → all C will be converted to U)

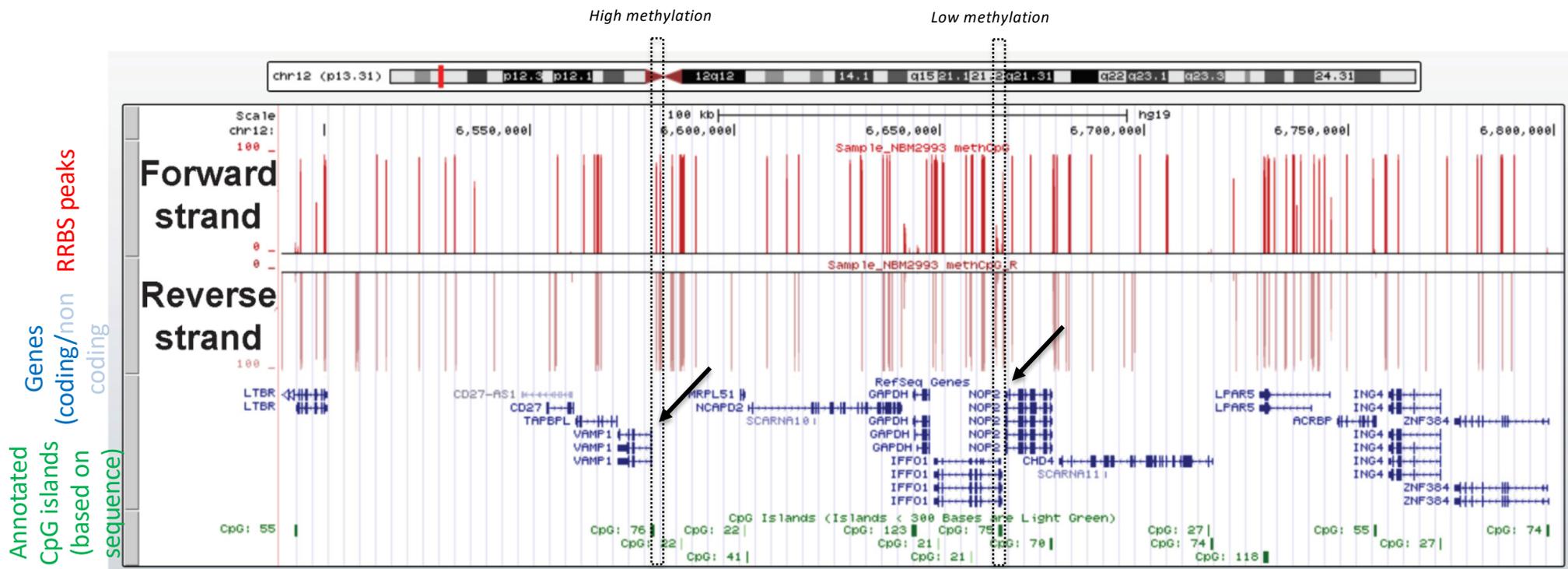
- Gives information on methylation state of all C in read region

- Allows to allocate methylated sequences (read build up diagram against refgenome)

- Allows to determine methylation grade in all C located in in differentially methylated regions

### 3. DNA methylation: Reduced representation bisulfite sequencing (RRBS)

- Alignment of RRBS data with classic CpG islands annotation (annotated based on sequence content)
- Clustering of RRBS reads in zones with CpG islands
- Analysis of methylation grade from RRBS data

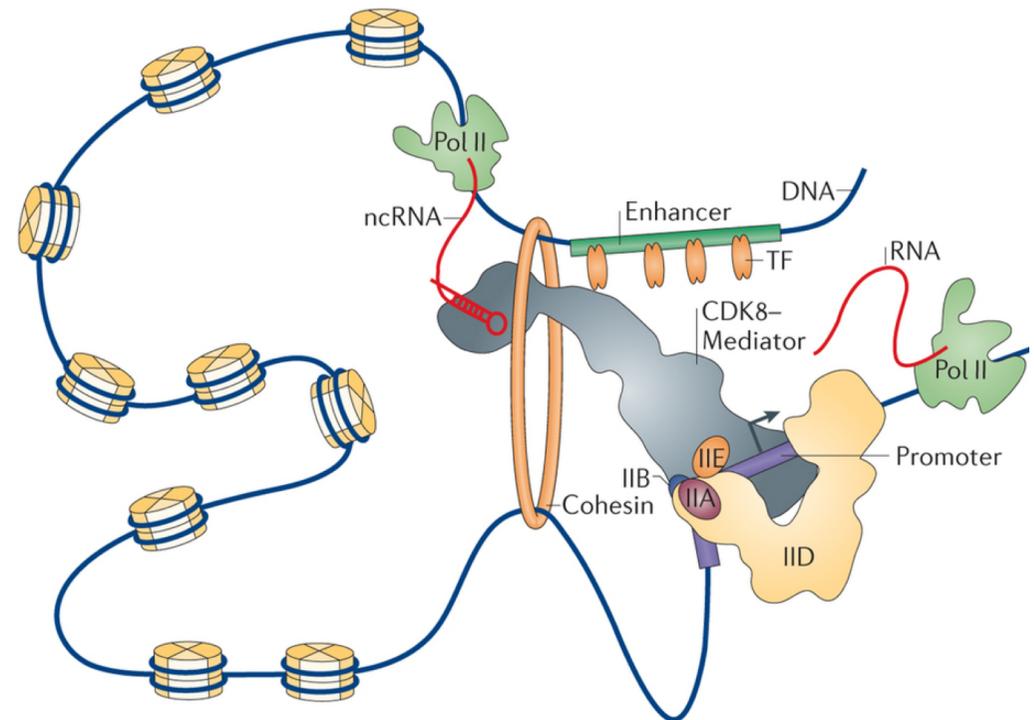


University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) genome browser<sup>43</sup> image of representative data from an RRBS sequencing lane. The y-axis scale bar represents 0-100% methylation at each cytosine covered with a minimum of 10x. The top custom track represents the forward strand and the lower custom track represents the reverse strand. Shown is chr12:6,489,523-6,802,422 (hg19) inclusive of refseq genes and CpG islands within this genomic region.

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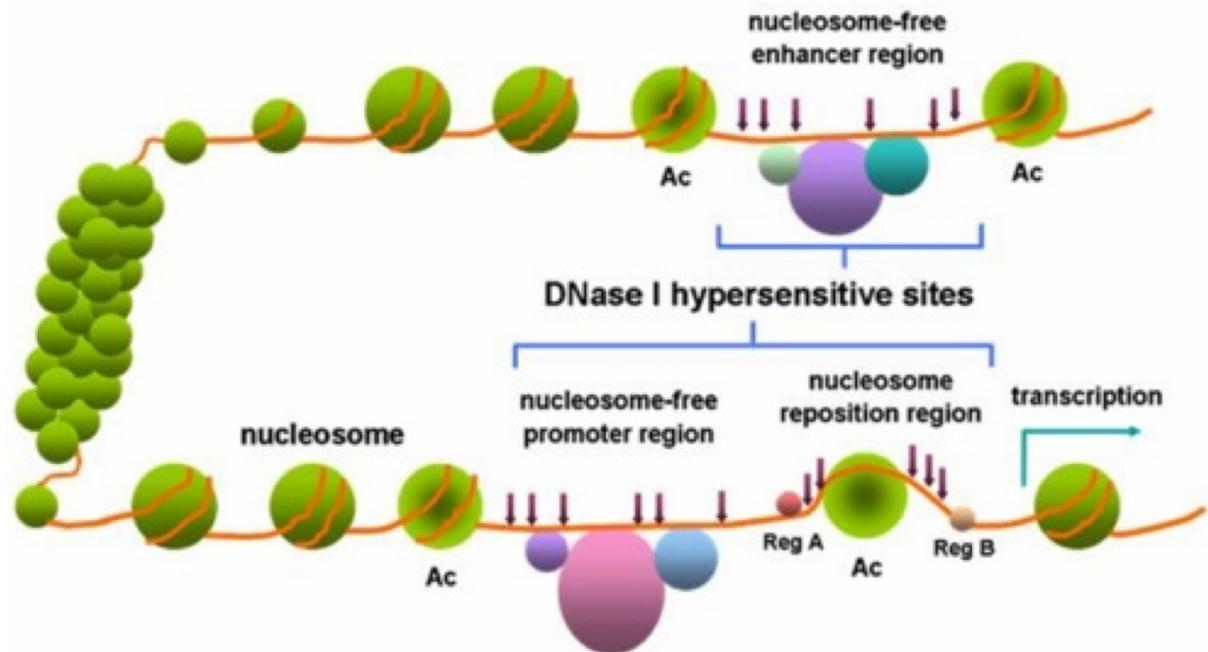


## 4. Local chromatin structure: determination of DNase I hypersensitivity (DNase Seq)

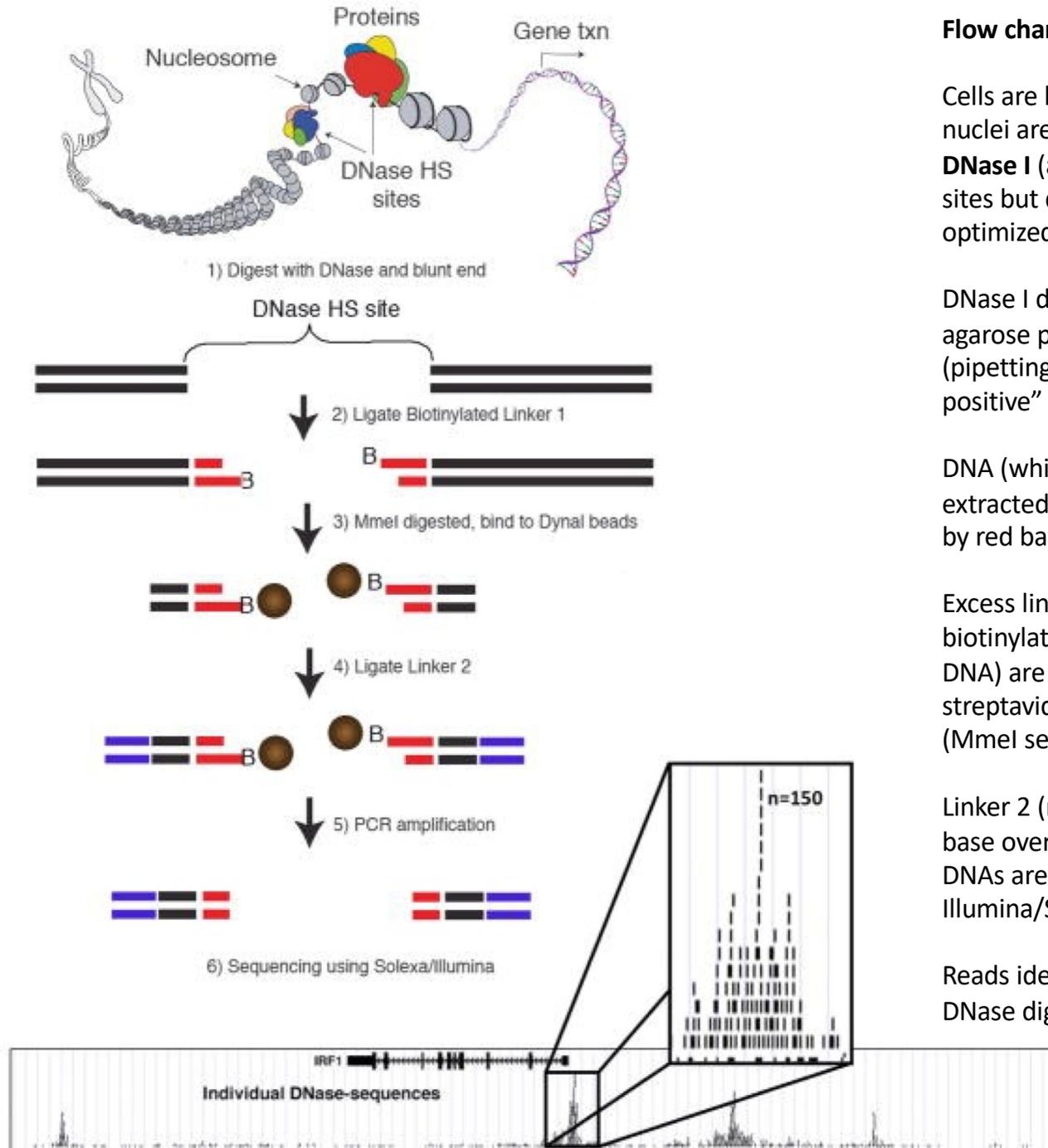
- determination of DNase I hypersensitivity (DNase Seq)
- Nucleosome occupancy (MNase-seq)
- ChIP-seq (chromatin modifications, transcription factors)
- 3 Dimensional space interaction

### DNase hypersensitive sites mark sequences involved in gene regulation

DNase I hypersensitive sites (DHSs) are regions of chromatin that are sensitive to cleavage by the DNase I enzyme. **In these specific regions of the genome, chromatin has lost its condensed structure, exposing the DNA and making it accessible.** This raises the availability of DNA to degradation by enzymes, such as DNase I. These **accessible chromatin zones are functionally related to transcriptional activity**, since this remodeled state is necessary for the binding of proteins such as transcription factors.



## 4a. Local chromatin structure: determination of DNase I hypersensitivity (DNase Seq)



### Flow chart of DNase-seq protocol.

Cells are lysed with detergent to release nuclei, and the nuclei are **digested with optimal concentrations of DNase I** (a concentration that allows digestion of sensitive sites but does not cleave all linker regions → need to be optimized)

DNase I digested DNA is immobilized in low-melt gel agarose plugs to reduce additional random shearing. (pipetting can cause breaks that would cause “false positive” DNase hyper sensitive sites).

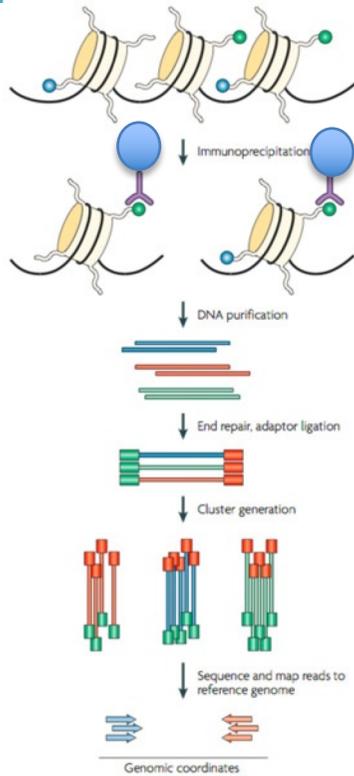
DNA (while still in the plugs) are then blunt-ended, extracted and ligated to biotinylated linker 1 (represented by red bars in the figure).

Excess linker is removed by gel purification, and biotinylated fragments (Linker 1 plus 20 bases of genomic DNA) are digested with MmeI, and captured by streptavidin-coated beads (represented by brown balls). (MmeI serves to fragment DNA)

Linker 2 (represented by the blue bars) is ligated to the 2 base overhang generated by MmeI, and the tagged 20 bp DNAs are amplified by PCR and sequenced by Illumina/Solexa.

Reads identify the borders of the gap created by the DNase digest

## 4b. Local chromatin structure: Chromatin immunoprecipitation sequencing (ChIP-seq)



**H3K4me3**

(active chromatin mark)

**H3K27me3**

(repressive chromatin mark)

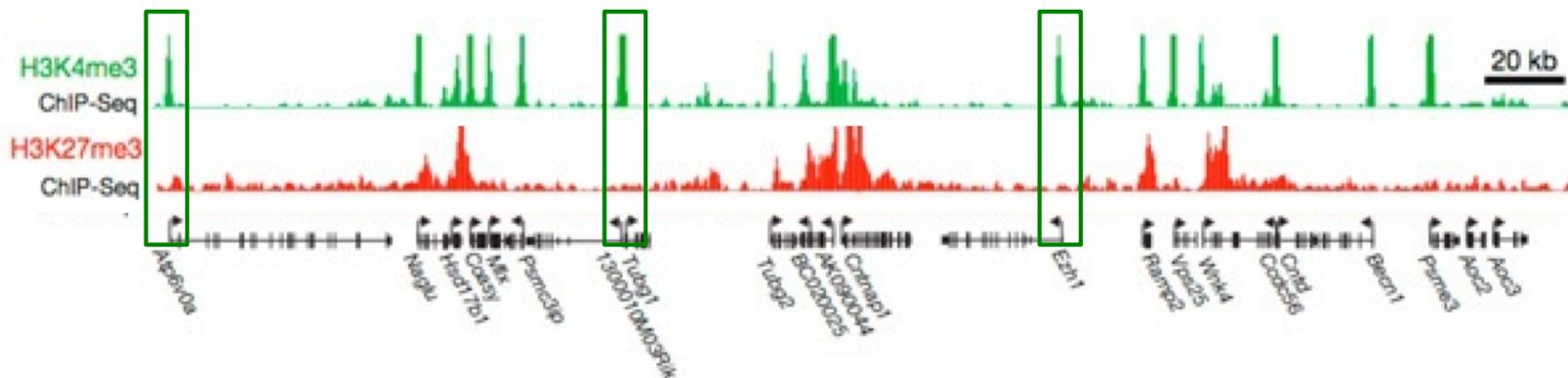
**H3K27Ac**

(regulatory elements)



magnetic beads covered with specific antibody

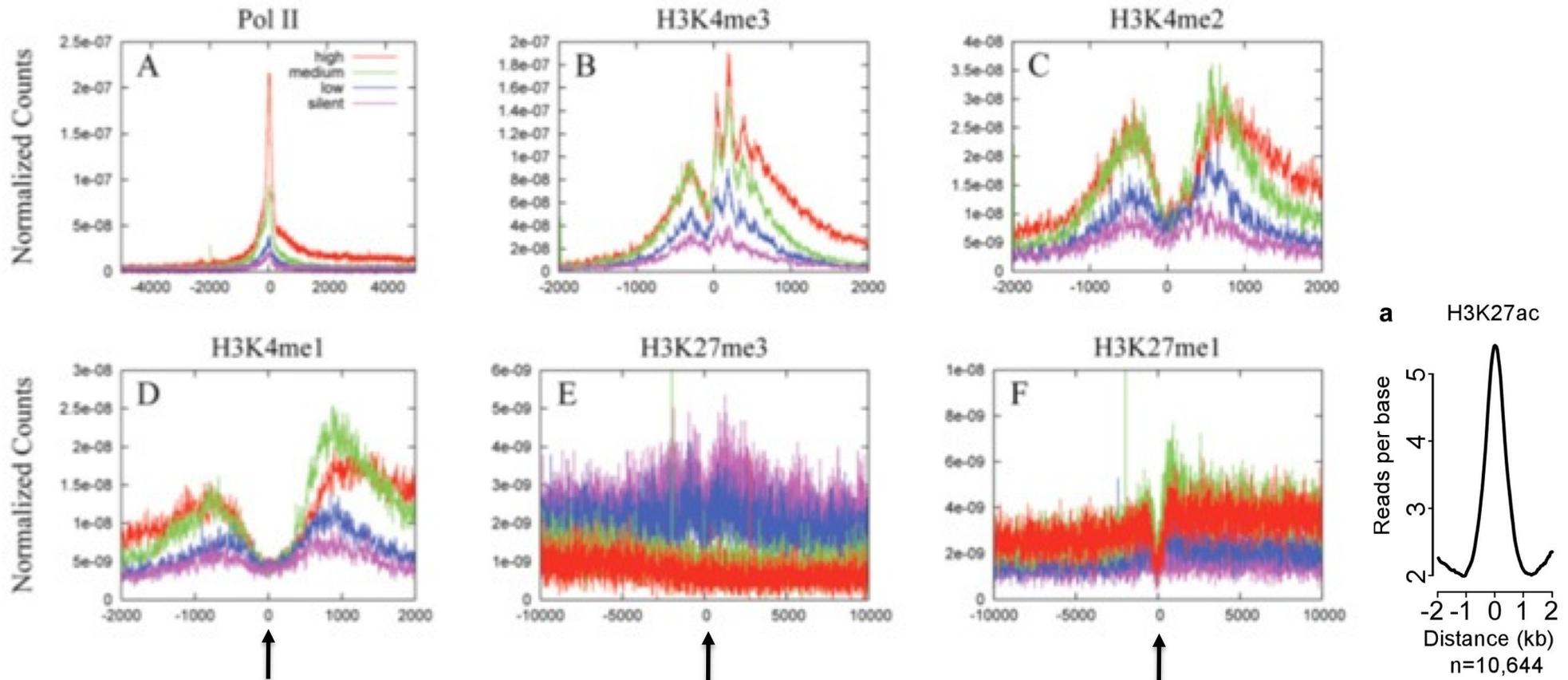
1. Cell fixation-proteins and DNA are crosslinked
2. Sonication of DNA (fragmentation)
3. Immunoprecipitation of chromatin using Specific antibodies: histone modifications or transcription Factors
4. Purify beads (magnet), washing of beads + elution of immunoprecipitated material
5. Library construction
6. Massive parallel sequencing
7. Align sequencing results to genomic sequence
8. Increase in read-number for a particular sequence indicates Enrichment for the histone modification or transcription factor



The results indicate that some modifications (H3K4me) are correlated with increased gene expression, while others (H3K27me3) correlate with decreases gene expression. The peaks observed in the H3K4me3 for genes at high expression levels occur at +50, +210, and +360 based which correlates well with the known spacing interval for nucleosome positioning. Furthermore, the dip in abundance at the transcriptional start site is consistent with local nucleosome depletion of actively expressed genes.

## 4. Local chromatin structure: Chromatin immunoprecipitation sequencing (ChIP-seq)

*A special chromatin code marks the transcriptional start site of RNA Pol II target genes*



Position 0:  
RNA Polymerase II: peak  
H4K4me3: peak  
H3K4me2: drop  
H3K4me1: drop  
H3K27me3: low  
H3K27me1: drop

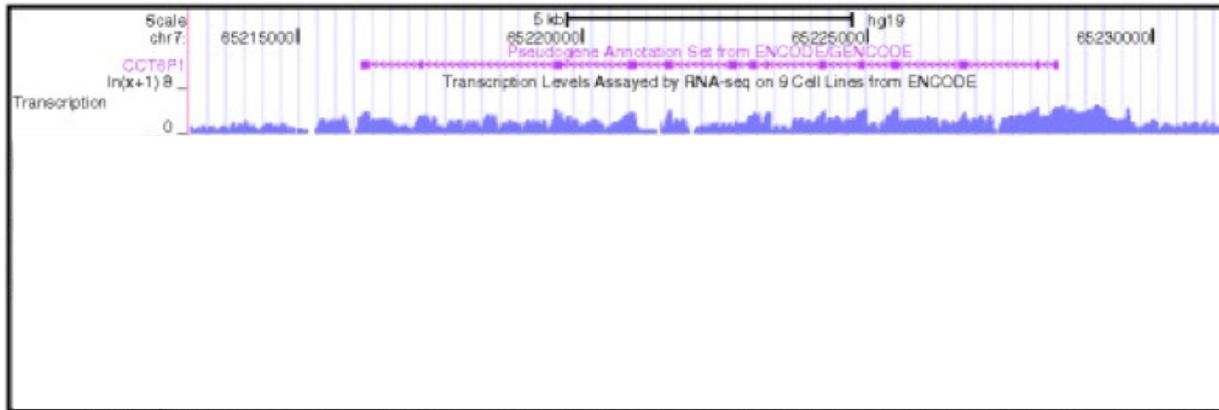
transcriptional start site = position 0  
Regulatory elements

**Same method can be used to localize transcription factors**

# AN EXAMPLE: ORGANISATION OF A FUNCTIONAL ELEMENT: PSEUDOGENES

(b)

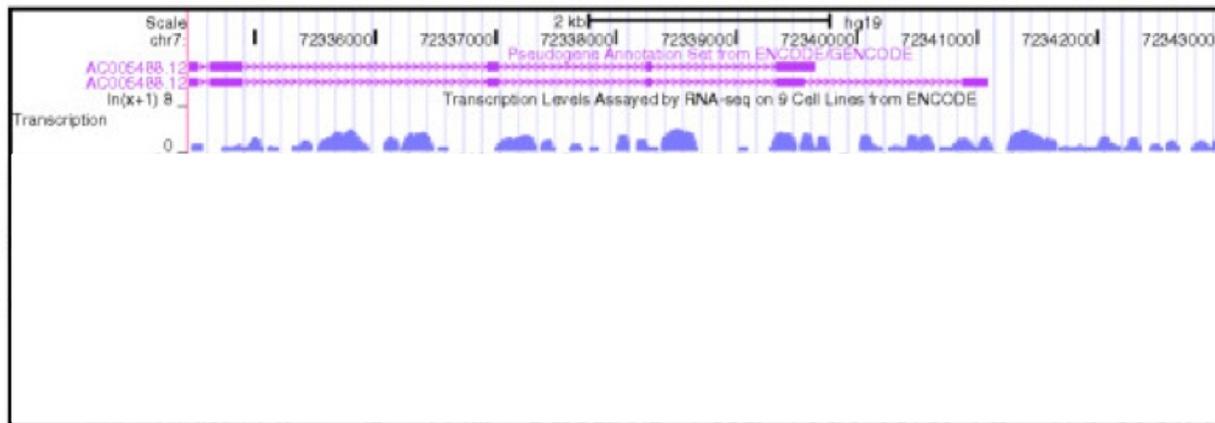
Transcribed With Additional Activity



IncRNA 1 (Pseudogene CCT6P1)

(c)

Transcribed Only



IncRNA 2 (Pseudogene AC0064BB12)

Question:

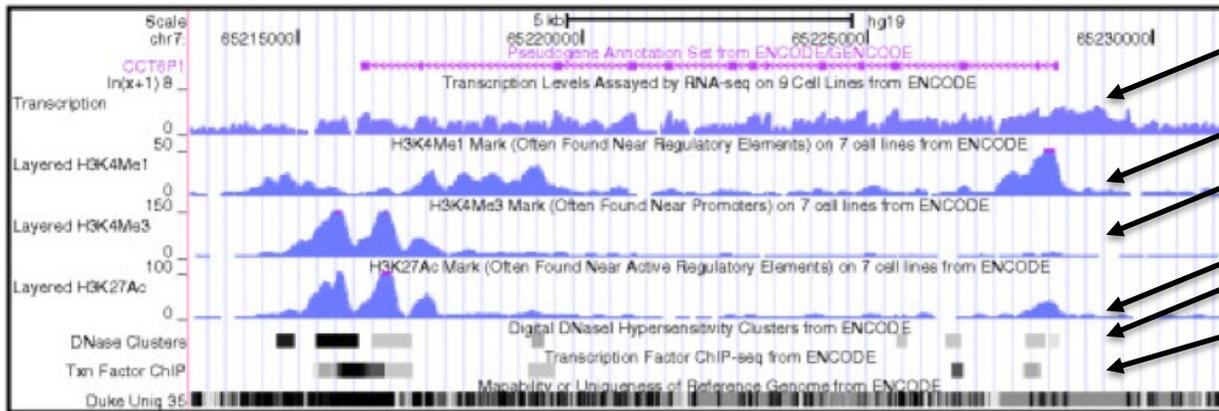
Which of the IncRNA is a “real” functional RNA?

Which of the IncRNA is a result of transcriptional noise?

**Summary of pseudogene annotation and case studies.** (a) A heatmap showing the annotation for transcribed pseudogenes including active chromatin segmentation, DNaseI hypersensitivity, active promoter, active Pol2, and conserved sequences. Raw data were from the K562 cell line. (b) A transcribed duplicated pseudogene (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000434500.1; genomic location, chr7: 65216129-65228323) showing consistent active chromatin accessibility, histone marks, and TFBSs in its upstream sequences. (c) A transcribed processed pseudogene (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000355920.3; genomic location, chr7: 72333321-72339656) with no active chromatin features or conserved sequences. (d) A non-transcribed duplicated pseudogene showing partial activity patterns (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000429752.2; genomic location, chr1: 109646053-109647388). (e) Examples of partially active pseudogenes. E1 and E2 are examples of duplicated pseudogenes. E1 shows *UGT1A2P* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000454886), indicated by the green arrowhead. *UGT1A2P* is a non-transcribed pseudogene with active chromatin and it is under negative selection. Coding exons of protein-coding paralogous loci are represented by dark green boxes and UTR exons by filled red boxes. E2 shows *FAM86EP* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000510506) as open green boxes, which is a transcribed pseudogene with active chromatin and upstream TFBSs and Pol2 binding sites. The transcript models associated with the locus are displayed as filled red boxes. Black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E3 and E4 show two unitary pseudogenes. E3 shows *DOC2GP* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000514950) as open green boxes, and transcript models associated with the locus are shown as filled red boxes. E4 shows *SLC22A20* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000530038). Again, the pseudogene model is represented as open green boxes, transcript models associated with the locus as filled red boxes, and black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E5 and E6 show two processed pseudogenes. E5 shows pseudogene *EGLN1* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000531623) inserted into duplicated pseudogene *SCAND2* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000541103), which is a transcribed pseudogene showing active chromatin but no upstream regulatory regions as seen in the parent gene. The pseudogene models are represented as open green boxes, transcript models associated with the locus are displayed as filled red boxes, and black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E6 shows a processed pseudogene *RP11-409K20* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000417984; filled green box), which has been inserted into a CpG island, indicated by an orange arrowhead. sRNA, small RNA.

# AN EXAMPLE: ORGANISATION OF A FUNCTIONAL ELEMENT: PSEUDOGENES

Transcribed With Additional Activity



IncRNA 1 (Pseudogene CCT6P1)

RNA expression: PRESENT

RNA Polymerase II: not shown

H4K4me1: near regulatory elements

H3K4me3: near promoters

H3K27Ac: near regulatory elements

DNase hypersensitive sites: at

regulatory elements

Transcription factor (TF) binding:

Near promoter

Transcribed Only



IncRNA 2 (Pseudogene AC0064BB12)

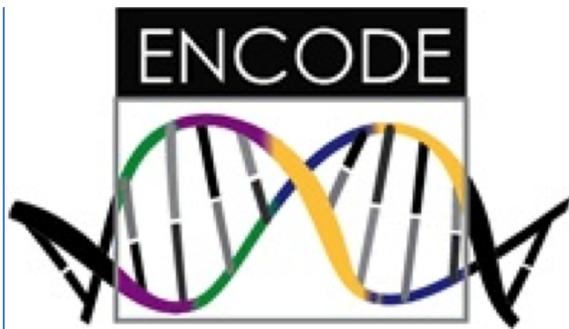
RNA expression: PRESENT

Chromatin shows low active marks

Poor definition

Presumably non-functional RNA transcripts

**Summary of pseudogene annotation and case studies.** (a) A heatmap showing the annotation for transcribed pseudogenes including active chromatin segmentation, DNaseI hypersensitivity, active promoter, active Pol2, and conserved sequences. Raw data were from the K562 cell line. (b) A transcribed duplicated pseudogene (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000434500.1; genomic location, chr7: 65216129-65228323) showing consistent active chromatin accessibility, histone marks, and TFBSs in its upstream sequences. (c) A transcribed processed pseudogene (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000355920.3; genomic location, chr7: 72333321-72339656) with no active chromatin features or conserved sequences. (d) A non-transcribed duplicated pseudogene showing partial activity patterns (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000429752.2; genomic location, chr1: 109646053-109647388). (e) Examples of partially active pseudogenes. E1 and E2 are examples of duplicated pseudogenes. E1 shows *UGT1A2P* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000454886), indicated by the green arrowhead. *UGT1A2P* is a non-transcribed pseudogene with active chromatin and it is under negative selection. Coding exons of protein-coding paralogous loci are represented by dark green boxes and UTR exons by filled red boxes. E2 shows *FAM86EP* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000510506) as open green boxes, which is a transcribed pseudogene with active chromatin and upstream TFBSs and Pol2 binding sites. The transcript models associated with the locus are displayed as filled red boxes. Black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E3 and E4 show two unitary pseudogenes. E3 shows *DOC2GP* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000514950) as open green boxes, and transcript models associated with the locus are shown as filled red boxes. E4 shows *SLC22A20* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000530038). Again, the pseudogene model is represented as open green boxes, transcript models associated with the locus as filled red boxes, and black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E5 and E6 show two processed pseudogenes. E5 shows pseudogene *EGLN1* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000531623) inserted into duplicated pseudogene *SCAND2* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000541103), which is a transcribed pseudogene showing active chromatin but no upstream regulatory regions as seen in the parent gene. The pseudogene models are represented as open green boxes, transcript models associated with the locus are displayed as filled red boxes, and black arrowheads indicate features novel to the pseudogene locus. E6 shows a processed pseudogene *RP11-409K20* (Ensembl gene ID: ENST00000417984; filled green box), which has been inserted into a CpG island, indicated by an orange arrowhead. sRNA, small RNA. Pei et al. *Genome Biology* 2012 13:R51 doi:10.1186/gb-2012-13-9-r51



Aim: Identify functional elements of the genome (ENCODE)

WORK STILL IN PROGRESS

<http://www.genome.gov/encode/>



Aim: a catalog of manually curated list of genes/transcripts (GENCODE)

<http://www.genencodegenes.org/>

Release ENCODE V4 (2020)

## ARTICLE

doi:10.1038/nature11247

# An integrated encyclopedia of DNA elements in the human genome

The ENCODE Project Consortium\*

The human genome encodes the blueprint of life, but the function of the vast majority of its nearly three billion bases is unknown. The Encyclopedia of DNA Elements (ENCODE) project has systematically mapped regions of transcription, transcription factor association, chromatin structure and histone modification. These data enabled us to assign biochemical functions for 80% of the genome, in particular outside of the well-studied protein-coding regions. Many discovered candidate regulatory elements are physically associated with one another and with expressed genes, providing new insights into the mechanisms of gene regulation. The newly identified elements also show a statistical correspondence to sequence variants linked to human disease, and can thereby guide interpretation of this variation. Overall, the project provides new insights into the organization and regulation of our genes and genome, and is an expansive resource of functional annotations for biomedical research.

## Article

# Expanded encyclopaedias of DNA elements in the human and mouse genomes

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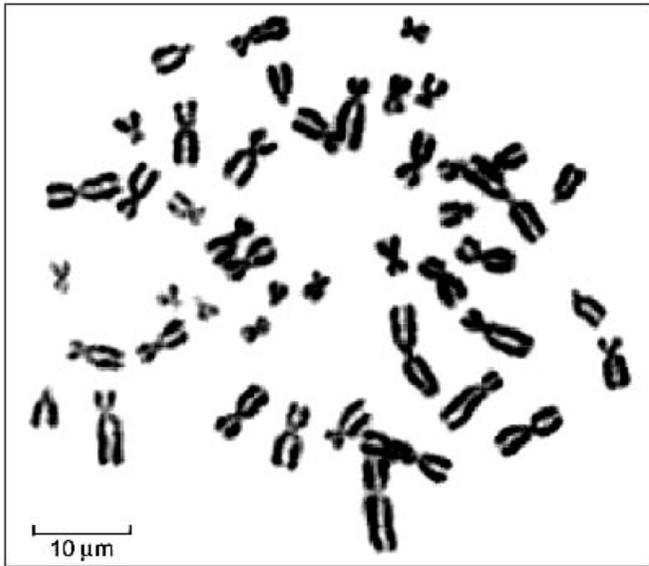
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The human and mouse genomes contain instructions that specify RNAs and proteins and govern the timing, magnitude, and cellular context of their production. To better delineate these elements, phase III of the Encyclopedia of DNA Elements (ENCODE) Project has expanded analysis of the cell and tissue repertoires of RNA transcription, chromatin structure and modification, DNA methylation, chromatin looping, and occupancy by transcription factors and RNA-binding proteins. Here we summarize these efforts, which have produced 5,992 new experimental datasets, including systematic determinations across mouse fetal development. All data are available through the ENCODE data portal (<https://www.encodeproject.org>), including phase II ENCODE<sup>1</sup> and Roadmap Epigenomics<sup>2</sup> data. We have developed a registry of 926,535 human and 339,815 mouse candidate *cis*-regulatory elements, covering 7.9 and 3.4% of their respective genomes, by integrating selected datatypes associated with gene regulation, and constructed a web-based server (SCREEN; <http://screen.encodeproject.org>) to provide flexible, user-defined access to this resource. Collectively, the ENCODE data and registry provide an expansive resource for the scientific community to build a better understanding of the organization and function of the human and mouse genomes.

# Almost all regions in the genome are subject to regulation and transcription



The vast majority (80.4%) of the human genome participates in at least one biochemical RNA and/or chromatin associated event in at least one cell type. Much of the genome lies close to a regulatory event: 95% of the genome lies within 8kb of a DNA-protein interaction (as assayed by bound ChIP-seq motifs or DNaseI footprints), and 99% is within 1.7kb of at least one of the biochemical events measured by ENCODE.

Classifying the genome into seven chromatin states suggests an initial set of 399,124 regions with enhancer-like features and 70,292 regions with promoter-like features, as well hundreds of thousands of quiescent regions. High-resolution analyses further subdivide the genome into thousands of narrow states with distinct functional properties.

It is possible to quantitatively correlate RNA sequence production and processing with both chromatin marks and transcription factor (TF) binding at promoters, indicating that promoter functionality can explain the majority of RNA expression variation.

Many non-coding variants in individual genome sequences lie in ENCODE-annotated functional regions; this number is at least as large as those that lie in protein coding genes.

SNPs associated with disease by GWAS are enriched within non-coding functional elements, with a majority residing in or near ENCODE-defined regions that are outside of protein coding genes. In many cases, the disease phenotypes can be associated with a specific cell type or TF.



# GENCODE – STATUS 27.09.2022:

Project that uses ENCODE for the annotation of functional elements in the genome

<http://www.gencodegenes.org/>



More about GENCODE Hum:

[Current human data](#)

[Release history](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Data format](#)

[FTP site](#)

## Statistics about the GENCODE Release 41

The statistics derive from the [gtf file](#) that contains only the annotation of the main chromosomes.

For details about the calculation of these statistics please see the [README\\_stats.txt file](#).

### General stats

Total No of Genes	61852	Total No of Transcripts	251236
Protein-coding genes	19370	Protein-coding transcripts	88780
- readthrough genes (not included)	647	- full length protein-coding	63370
Long non-coding RNA genes	19095	- partial length protein-coding	25410
Small non-coding RNA genes	7566	Nonsense mediated decay transcripts	20933
Pseudogenes	14736	Long non-coding RNA loci transcripts	54291
- processed pseudogenes	10662		
- unprocessed pseudogenes	3573		
- unitary pseudogenes	250		
- pseudogenes	15	Total No of distinct translations	65052
Immunoglobulin/T-cell receptor gene segments		Genes that have more than one distinct translations	13614
- protein coding segments	410		
- pseudogenes	236		

**Long ncRNAs: >200nt**

**Short ncRNAs:<200nt**

# GENCODE – STATUS 23.09.2024:

## Project that uses ENCODE for the annotation of functional elements in the genome

<http://www.encodegenes.org/>



### Human

#### Statistics about the GENCODE Release 46

The statistics derive from the [gtf file](#) that contains only the annotation of the main chromosomes.

For details about the calculation of these statistics please see the [README stats.txt file](#).

#### General stats

Total No of Genes	63086	Total No of Transcripts	254070	
Protein-coding genes	19411	Protein-coding transcripts	89581	
- readthrough genes (not included)	654	- full length protein-coding	64695	+800
Long non-coding RNA genes	20310	- partial length protein-coding	24886	
Small non-coding RNA genes	7565	Nonsense mediated decay transcripts	21774	+800
Pseudogenes	14716	Long non-coding RNA loci transcripts	59927	+5000
- processed pseudogenes	10657			
- unprocessed pseudogenes	3564			
- unitary pseudogenes	258			
Immunoglobulin/T-cell receptor gene segments		Total No of distinct translations	65650	
- protein coding segments	411	Genes that have more than one distinct translatio	13620	
- pseudogenes	237			

# release  
41→46

Long ncRNAs: >200nt

Short ncRNAs:<200nt