

Genetica Humana
Soledad Berrios del Solar, 2014
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Sometimes we do not realize that Spanish speaking people are one of the major linguistic group on our planet! Thus we have to welcome this excellent book devoted to, as the title clearly tells us, human genetics for the pleasure of the Spanish speaking people. Those who love genetics, young fellows at the beginning of their careers, esteemed professors and historians of science will get for an affordable price an entire up-to-date collection of modern genetics. The book is set at the high international standard as we are used by the major scientific publishing companies, literally full of color pictures and schemes, with self-evaluation parts to allow the youngest of our colleagues (the students!) to check their progress in understanding human genetics. However, I have to stress that it sounds too limitative *human genetics*: to me, Soledad Berrios and all of the colleagues involved in writing the book has taken human genetics as the main framework to tell the readers about genetics, *sensu lato*. The mouse cytogenetics is superbly presented and illustrated as one of the main *tool* we handle to model human diseases. So, it is the always fascinating meiosis process with all of the enzymatic machinery involved to orches-

trate what it appears a controlled *tango* danced by chromosome couples that first attract themselves and later on move apart: here the Raul Fernandez Donoso internationally appreciated ability to picture those movements is clearly visible, out of the chapter signature!

Beginning with several chapters that equip the readers with the basic biological concepts (DNA, chromosomes, genes, human genomes, mendelian principles, *etc.*) needed to understand the gene expression regulation, quantitative genetics and the genetics of the developmental processes, the book ferry the readers to the population genetics and the genetics of the evolutionary processes till the presentation of the – omics world and the OGM. Due to my personal expertise I have to tell that the chapters devoted to chromosomes, developmental biology, gene expression regulation and evolution (to mention a few) are those I was immediately looking at. However, all of the topics treated is actually a *hot topic* for western societies due to the great relevance that genetics holds today in building not only the scientific framework within which humans are moving into the new millennium: DNA based societies are revolutionizing the old conceptual schemes of philosophy, law, economies, health world, genetic tests and direct-to-consumer genetic testing for health-related purposes, privacy, genetic modification of organisms and the proper concept of what human is (the post-human). Thus, the final chapter devoted to the ethical

reflections that genetics is inspiring, written by one of the major expert (Professor Carlos Valenzuela), is adding a particular value to the book.

Another relevant fact the readers have to be acquainted of is that the book is so well designed and the contributions of such an high level (fifteen internationally well renown colleagues, each leadering a specific theme) that the book can profitably be read and used by university beginners, researchers, full professor and high schools teachers as well as their students: a very vast audience! This idea is shared with a very great expert, Francisco J. Ayala, who wrote a very pleasant foreword. Difficult to say which of the eighteen chapter is more fascinating and intriguing, not to tell of the great pleasure while reading thanks to the very high level of the abundant educational color illustrations used to emphasize concepts. This fact allows the readers (even those who are not Spanish speaking) catching concepts thanks to the non-verbal informational capacity of the pictures. This greatly helps to highlight the genetic epistemology of the worlds and methods we use: a must-have even for non-Spanish speaking biologists!

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