

GENETICS, PHILOSOPHY

HOW TO EXPLAIN GENOMICS TO LAY PEOPLE

7.12.2008

I had to give several lectures last week explaining lay people how genomic studies work. I finally decided to compare the human DNA with the bible text – not so much in the sense of Collins' language of God but the sheer amount of information contained in a single cell. Here is just one slide of this talk – it seems that the comparison worked quite well – in particular the fact that if you can read a text you will not necessarily understand it.

Die Bibel	Der Mensch
ca 5 Milliarden Buchstaben (dt)	3 Milliarden Basen pro Zelle
erste gedruckte Version 1452	erstmalig entziffert im Jahr 2001
Auflage: 2,5 Milliarden (10 ⁹)	10 Billionen (10 ¹²) Zellen
1.189 Kapitel	15.000 Gene
66 Bücher	23 Chromosomen
26 Buchstaben, 3 Umlaute (dt)	4 Buchstaben Adenin, Thymin, Cytosin, Guanin, 2 Umlaute
5.000 Manuskripte (NT)	14 Millionen Punktunterschiede