

New DNA encyclopedia attempts to map function of entire human genome

A torrent of new data charts the human genome in unprecedented detail, a landmark accomplishment compared by some scientists to the genome's sequencing in 1999.

Hundreds of thousands of new genomic pieces, catalogued for the very first time, are contained in the data, which is described Sept. 4 in 30 papers published by *Nature* and the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. Also included are preliminary descriptions of how these pieces fit together.

Of course, if history is any guide, expectations should be tempered. The more that's learned about the genome, the more complex it proves to be — a mountain that seems taller with every ascending step. But the view deserves to be appreciated.

"Originally genetics was focused on the one percent," said bioinformaticist Mark Gerstein of Yale University, referring to geneticists' early concentration on genes that code for proteins, which represent just a tiny fraction of the genome's myriad parts. "We're shining a light on the 99 percent."

Gerstein is one of hundreds of researchers who participated in ENCODE, or the [Encyclopedia of DNA Elements](#), a massive collaboration launched in 2003 to catalogue the human genome's every last piece.

View the original article here: [New DNA encyclopedia attempts to map function of entire human genome](#)