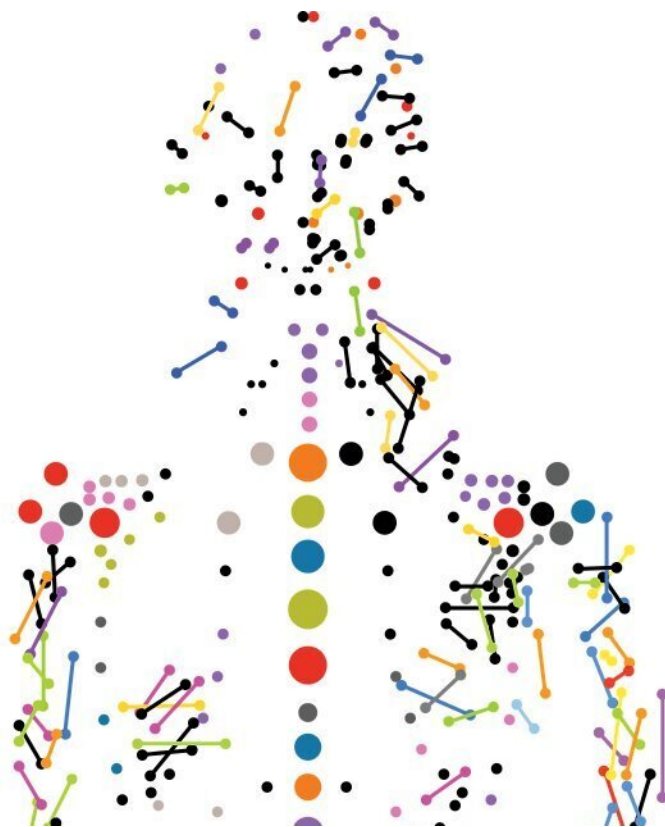


New open-access resource counters misinformation on genomics studies of human behavior

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New research on the genomic influences on traits such as intelligence, household income, and sexual behavior captures public attention, but it

is also used to justify beliefs in racial and social inequalities. To counter bias and other misinformation, The Hastings Center announces an [open-access repository](#) that aggregates and enhances FAQs—frequently asked questions—by the genomics researchers themselves that explain what their studies do and do not show.

The current issue of *Nature Genetics* features an article on the resource written by the scholars who created it: Daphne Oluwaseun Martschenko, a postdoctoral fellow at the Stanford University Center for Biomedical Ethics; Lucas J. Matthews, an assistant professor of bioethics at Columbia University and a presidential scholar at The Hastings Center; Benjamin W. Dominique, an assistant professor in the Stanford Graduate School of Education; and Sam Trejo, an assistant professor of sociology at Princeton University.

"As scholars motivated by deep concern about the long history of misuse of genetic research, we believe these FAQs are socially responsible, commendable exemplars of science communication for both experts and general audiences," the authors state in an introduction to the repository.

While researchers' FAQs on genomics research have existed for several years, prior to the new repository they were difficult to find. Some were posted on research consortia websites, while others were on personal websites and occasionally included as supplementary material to research publications. The new resource centralizes the FAQs and provides brief, accessible explanations of each study. They include studies of educational traits and outcomes, social and environmental factors (such as [household income](#)), psychological and psychiatric behaviors, and sexual behaviors.

"It is our hope that FoGS, our open-access repository of FAQs on human genomic research, sparks dialogue on how best to achieve ethically and socially responsible research communication and provides easily

accessible information for funders, researchers, policymakers, journalists, industry, and patient groups on emerging studies in social and behavioral genomics," the authors write in *Nature Genetics*. The [repository](#) will be updated regularly; authors invite researchers to submit additional FAQs for consideration.

More information: Daphne Oluwaseun Martschenko et al, FoGS provides a public FAQ repository for social and behavioral genomic discoveries, *Nature Genetics* (2021). [DOI: 10.1038/s41588-021-00929-5](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41588-021-00929-5)

Provided by The Hastings Center

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