

Class 05: Gene Alignments (1)

Held: Thursday, 8 September 2011

Summary: Today we begin to delve more deeply into reasons and techniques for aligning sequences, particularly DNA sequences.

Related Pages:

- EBoard.
- Reading: Chapter 3.

Notes:

- For Tuesday, respond to Altschul *et al.* 1990. This paper is particularly complex, so it's okay if you don't understand everything.
- For Tuesday, start considering the Needleman-Wunsch algorithm.
- The On-Your-Own Project 2.6 is due next Thursday.
- Sam updated the office hours on the course front door.
- EC for Teriak Kosciak talk, Thursday, 4:30, Science 3821.
- EC for Football, Saturday, 1 p.m.
- EC for Les Duke, Saturday.
- EC for Volleyball, Saturday at Noon, 4 p.m.
- EC for Men's Soccer, Sunday, 2pm, Coe.
- Biology picnic Friday!
- If you choose to participate in the '80's party, please don't try to replicate the excesses of the '80's.

Overview:

- Chapter 2 Programming Lab.
- The Sequence Explosion.
- Aligning Sequences: A Biological Perspective.
- Bacteria and Antibiotic Resistance.

Chapter 2 Programming Lab

- Do the programming lab for chapter 2.
- Keep your groups from Tuesday!
- Most of the questions ask you to design an algorithm and then give you a Python-based implementation. *Please spend the time thinking about how you would write the algorithm before you look at the code!*

The Sequence Explosion

- Tons of sequence data! With exponential growth.
- Many model systems
 - E. Coli and other bacteria
 - Yeast - a single cell eucaryote
 - ...
- Sequencing the model systems helped us build technologies that helped with the Human Genome Project
 - Biological techniques.
 - Computational techniques.
 - Robots!
- Whose DNA is in the human sequence?

Aligning Sequences: A Biological Perspective

- Why should one care about aligning sequences?
 - It's up to students to answer this question.

Bacteria and Antibiotic Resistance

- Side note: 90% of our cells are bacteria (gut, skin, etc.)
- Until this century, many people died from bacterial infection
 - Bacteria use our bodies as hosts, reproduce, and kill you
 - But they can't kill you too quickly, or it won't spread
 - Diarrhea helps bacteria spread quickly, as they get into the water supply
- Some genes in our genome seem to have been selected b/c they support bacterial resistance.
 - Side note: Allele that makes you resistant to ___ virus also makes you more susceptible to West Nile.
- In 1929, Fleming identified a fungus that produced an antimicrobial agent (that we call penicillin)
 - Lots of research to efficiently get penicillin
 - Rare enough at first that they would harvest the urine of those treated with penicillin and then re-extract the penicillin
- A variety of Nobel prizes related to penicillin
 - Fleming
 - Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin (1964) - Figured out the crystal structure
 - A few more people who helped in designing the technology to mass-produce.
- What happens when we apply penicillin to a colony of bacteria?
 - Most die
 - A few, somewhat resistant ones, survive
 - Bacteria duplicate quickly
 - These bacteria don't have a lot of competition
 - So you get a *lot* of resistant bacteria

- What does Erythromycin do?
 - Binds to ribosome
 - Prevents creation of protein
 - So, if you change the ribosome a bit (gene *ermB*), it may not bind
 - With any antibiotic, the regular bodily defense systems also helps.
 - You want to take the full course of antibiotic to kill as much as you can, including partially resistant
 - You hope the body takes care of the rest
 - Danger! Antibiotics invoke SOS responses in bacteria: Higher rate of mutation.
 - Going beyond inheritance: Vertical transfer takes some time, so how do we get so much transmission
 - Transduction
 - Viruses
 - The environment?
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