

MY DNA PROFILE
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Synchronously, as I learn more about my recent health problems. I also had my DNA tested and profiled by an online company called 23andMe. The link is here.

<https://www.23andme.com/>

It cost a whopping \$300, but was well worth the money, IMO. I have to admit that it is a little scary to have a smorgasbord of personal details suddenly laid out on the table in one fell swoop. Usually doctors feed this to us a peek at a time. But, wham! There it was, almost everything I could want to know about myself, including elevated (and below normal) disease risks (118), health-carrier status (48), response to drugs (20), and a lot more, everything from my tendency to have curly hair to my earwax type (wet). And that is just the health portion.

Best of all, you don't have to draw blood or anything gnarly. They send you a little tube in the mail that you put some saliva in, and return to them in a pre-stamped box. It takes about one minute to create the sample, and then three weeks (mine was less) for them to post your profile online (private of course). Then you can pursue literally hundreds of ways of looking at your data. It is like peeking at the last page of a mystery novel.

The analysis also divulges both my maternal and paternal ancestry lines. I was very, very disappointed to find that I have no Native American heritage in my genetic make-up. Bummer. And, after spending about one third of my life studying African American music, I have none of those genes either. It claims I am 100% European stock (how boring), with a predominance of Irish blood. Well, I knew that I was Irish. My mother's name was Carey and Margaret's mother was a Murphy, so our kids are half Irish too!

The profile also has found me a bunch of genetic relatives, including a 2nd cousin that I can contact if I wish. I probably wish, but have not yet gotten up the nerve to write that email. I eventually will. Let's see.... Just what is a second cousin anyway? And there are a lot more relatives in the list that I can consider. Right now I am still genetically shy? I wonder if the profile shows that?

The health-related information alone is worth the price of admission. It shows whether you have a risk of colorectal cancer (and many other cancers), Alzheimer's disease, Tourette's syndrome, prostate cancer, Crohn's disease, brain aneurysms, leukemia, hay fever, kidney disease, sarcoma, melanoma, back pain, etc. The list just goes on and on. Need I tell you that this is a fascinating read, since it is exclusively all about me.

It also points out my caffeine metabolism, alcohol consumption, likelihood of heroin addiction,

and you name it. Talk about getting personal. Ouch!

Another whole section is on ancestor painting, the ability to look at my family tree, compare the DNA of family members (if their profile exists), and so forth. And then there is the whole online community of other DNA profilers, gobs of them. Right now I am happy to be just a lurker in those forums.

I thought some of my Facebook friends might like to know about this DNA profiling service. There is nothing quite like it. The only analogy that comes to mind is that of the internet itself. If you think the Internet is fascinating, then searching around in your DNA profile is super-fascinating, because they have finally got your number, precisely!

Am I sorry I peeked in the book of my DNA? Not even a little bit, although I am not sure I want you looking over my shoulder. Some of this stuff is private in the true sense of that word.