

March 29, 1990

William F. Raub
Acting Director
National Institutes of Health
Room 126, Building 1
9600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

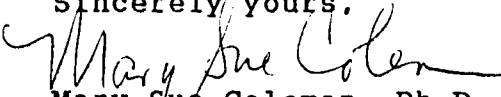
Dear Dr. Raub:

I am writing to inform you that I am deeply troubled by the news I hear of plans to proceed with the Human Genome Project. The proposals which favor the brute force approach do not have much appeal for me or my colleagues. The problem with this stems from the fact most of the sequencing work will not be creative or innovative and will not allow students or postdoctoral fellows to generate knowledge that will further their own careers. We already read of reports of students refusing such projects because they do not wish to spend their graduate or postdoctoral time in the repetitive process of sequencing some miniscule part of the genome which in all likelihood will yield no interesting biological information.

The Human Genome Project is simply a bad idea. Science in the United States is strong precisely for the reason that basic research is competitively reviewed and funded and that innovative, creative ideas are what drives research. I believe that we should fund scientists who are targetting interesting segments of DNA for study. Using this approach we will generate the information we need to understand the human genome. If instead we divert funds from the best scientists to projects that simply generate endless sequence information, we will damage the scientific enterprise.

I urge you to oppose the Human Genome Project and support biomedical research through its traditional funding mechanisms.

Sincerely yours,


Mary Sue Coleman, Ph.D.
Professor

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