One level deeper: Polymorphism wiki

Finn Årup Nielsen

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Response to (Huss, III et al., 2008) about genes in Wikipedia on *PLoS Biology* web-site.

1 Details

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First name   : Finn Årup
Last name    : Nielsen
E-mail       : fn@imm.dtu.dk
Title        : Senior researcher
Affiliation  : CIMBI, DTU Informatics
Title of your Response: One level deeper: Polymorphism wiki
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2 Comment

With the creation of several thousands of articles on genes in Wikipedia the authors have made no small impact on the science part of the encyclopedia. In a recent work ("Clustering Scientific Citations in Wikipedia", Wikimania conference 2008) I counted the number of times Wikipedia contributors made use of the "cite journal" template. This template is mostly used for well-structured citations of articles appearing in scientific journals. Through 2007 the use steadily increased, and I counted 76432 citations in October 2007. My next count in March 2008 showed a tripling to 231359 citations. This marked increase was mostly due to the citations put in by the authors with their automated computer program. Now the majority of structured scientific citations is to gene-associated articles.

Recently wikis have gotten one level deeper in genetics: To genetic polymorphisms. The SNPedia uses the same software as Wikipedia to present information about individual single nucleotide polymorphisms. I recently began adding a few articles about polymorphisms to Wikipedia itself, see, e.g., "5-HTTLPR" and "rs6265". Over 300 papers have been written about 5-HTTLPR, with close to 30 for personality trait association studies alone, so for some polymorphisms there are plenty of authoritative sources. When the information is encoded in a structured way, such as a template, extraction is relatively easy, helping off-Wikipedia reorganization and analysis of the data. I made a small example of restructuring Wikipedia SNP information on our web-site: http://hendrix.imm.dtu.dk/services/wikipedia/snipper.html

References

Huss, III, J. W., Orozco, C., Goodale, J., Chunlei, Batalov, S., Vickers, T. J., Valafar, F., and Su, A. I. (2008). A gene wiki for community annotation of gene function. *PLoS Biology*, 6(7):5175.