

CS4330: Combinatorial Methods in Bioinformatics

# Primer on genome sequencing technologies

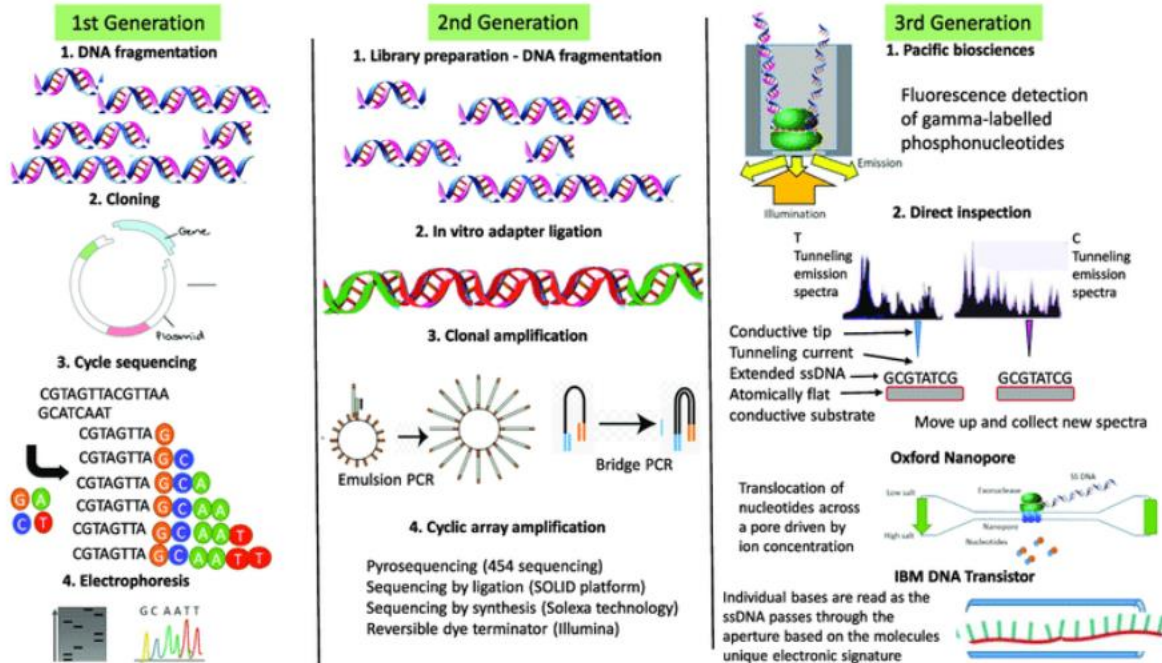
Wong Limsoon



**NUS**  
National University  
of Singapore

National University of Singapore

# Genome sequencing technologies



The advancement of DNA sequencing. 1st generation sequencing or Sanger sequencing involves the fragmentation and cloning of the target DNA into plasmid vectors. The DNA is then sequenced using a cyclic chain termination method with either radio isotopically labelled or fluorescently labelled dNTPs. The 2nd generation sequencing technologies are all based on sequencing by synthesis. Two common methods used are emulsion PCR and bridge PCR. Following these methods, different platforms make use of different sequencing technologies. 3rd generation sequencing methods have been developed by many different companies and are based on different technologies. They all involve more direct examination of the target DNA [19].

Image credit:  
Zodwa Dlamini




# 1st generation: Sequencing by cyclic chain termination

1977 – 2000s

Let's watch this video together

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=ONGdehkB8jU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONGdehkB8jU)



## 2nd or next- generation: Sequencing by synthesis

2005 – 2010s

Let's watch this video together

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMyCqWhwB8E>

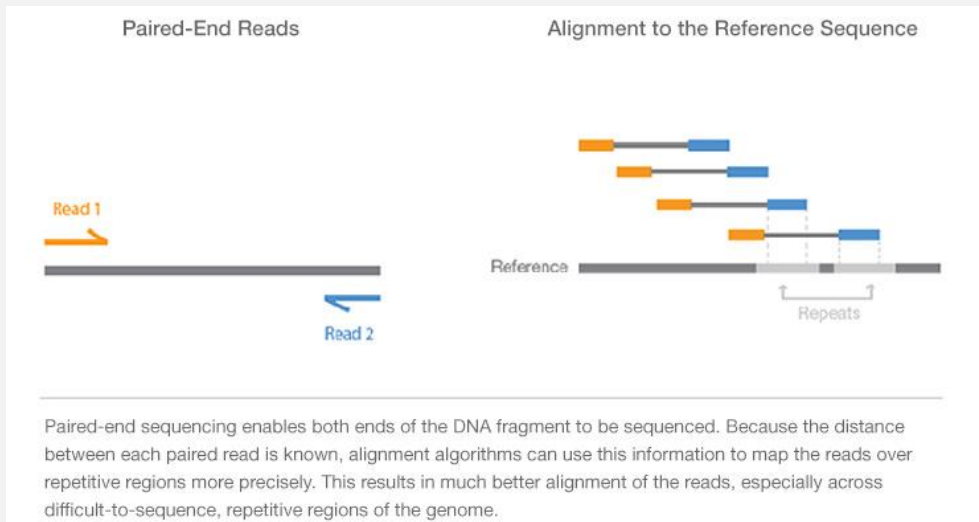
You can also watch this one on  
your own


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZeN-IgjYCo>

# Important variation of 2nd-generation sequencing: Pair-end sequencing

Let's watch this video together

<https://youtu.be/WneZp3fSJlk>





**3rd generation:  
Long-read  
sequencing by  
“direct inspection”  
2010s and ongoing**

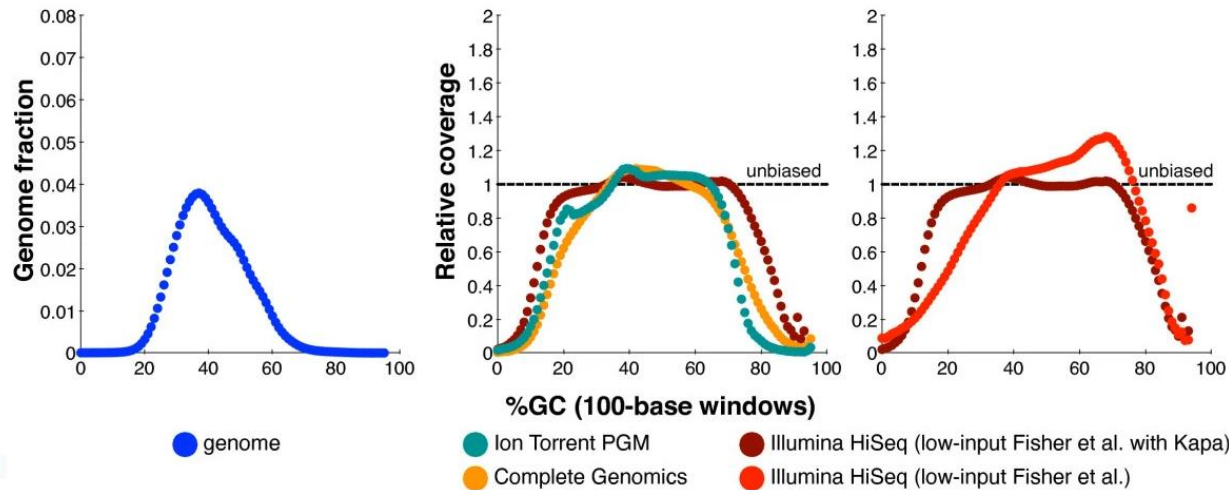
Let's watch this video together

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=CGWZvHli3i0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGWZvHli3i0)

# GC-bias in sequencing data

Relative coverage =

$$\frac{\text{coverage of a given reference base in a genome}}{\text{mean coverage of all reference bases}}$$



**GC-bias plots for the human genome.** Left: the GC composition distribution of the human genome (HG19, GRCh37). Center and right: GC-bias plots for several data sets from human NA12878. Unbiased coverage would be represented by a horizontal line at relative coverage = 1. Center: HiSeq v3 with sample-preparation reagents from Kapa Biosystems (Table 2, data set 14), Ion Torrent PGM (data set 15), and Complete Genomics data (data set 16). Right: HiSeq v3 with sample-preparation reagents from Kapa Biosystems (data set 14, as in center panel) and HiSeq v3 with the standard Fisher *et al.* [31] reagents (data set 13). Note that Illumina relative coverage exceeded the y-axis above 93% GC content. Relative coverage is only plotted for GC percentages for which there are at least 1,000 100-base windows in the genome.

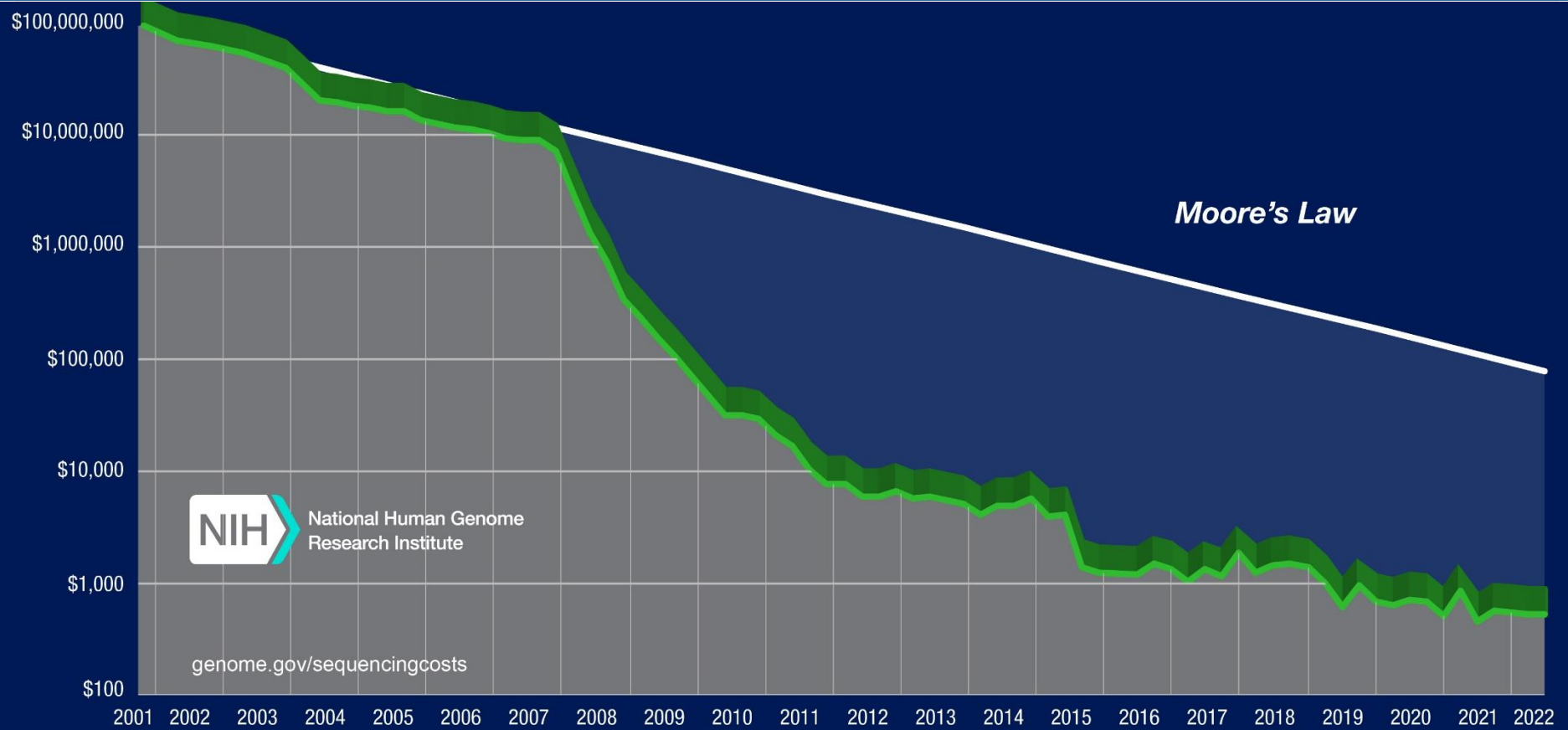
Read

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.biophys.30.1.1> to

understand the chemistry likely to be underlying this phenomenon



# Cost per human genome





# Speed per human genome

It took 13 years &  
\$2.7 billion to  
sequence the 1st  
human genome

Now, a human  
genome can be  
sequenced in 1 day  
at less than \$1000

## Fastest DNA sequencing technique helps undiagnosed patients find answers in mere hours

A research effort led by Stanford scientists set the first Guinness World Record for the fastest DNA sequencing technique, which was used to sequence a human genome in just 5 hours and 2 minutes.

January 12, 2022 - By Hanae Armitage



Euan Ashley and John Gorzynski were part of a team that devised a method for genome sequencing so speedy it produced results for one study participant in just over five hours.  
*Steve Fisch*

<https://med.stanford.edu/news/all-news/2022/01/dna-sequencing-technique.html>

# Sequencing error rates & read lengths

1st-gen, e.g. Sanger

Error rate ~0.01%, read length 400 – 900 nt

2nd-gen, e.g. Illumina

Error rate ~0.1%, read length 150 – 300 nt

3rd-gen, e.g. PacBio & ONT,

Error rate ~10-15%, read length 5000 - 15000 nt

# Base quality

Phred score,  $Q_{\text{Phred}} = -10 \log_{10}(P)$

*Log of prob of incorrect base call,  $P$*

Base quality score,  $Q$

*Confidence of a nucleotide base call, assigned by sequencing machine. Typically,  $Q = 10^{-Q_{\text{Phred}}/10}$*

$Q_{\text{Phred}} = 20 \Rightarrow 1\%$  chance of incorrect base call

$Q_{\text{Phred}} = 30 \Rightarrow 0.1\%$  chance of incorrect base call

$Q_{\text{Phred}} = 40 \Rightarrow 0.01\%$  chance of incorrect base call

# Quality control in sequencing data

Base quality score (Phred score)

Read length distribution

- Examining the distribution of read lengths helps ensure consistency across the dataset. Deviations from the expected length may indicate issues with library preparation or sequencing.

GC content

- Analyzing the GC content distribution ensures that there are no biases that could affect downstream analyses. An uneven distribution may indicate biases in amplification during library preparation.

Adapter contamination

- Adapters are short DNA sequences used in library preparation. Detecting and removing adapter contamination is crucial to prevent artifacts and misinterpretations in downstream analyses.

Error rate

- Monitoring error rates, especially in low-complexity regions, helps identify potential sequencing or library preparation artifacts.

# Additional quality control in sequencing data when there is a reference genome

## Duplicate removal

- PCR amplification during library preparation can introduce duplicate reads. Identifying and removing duplicates is essential for accurate quantification and variant calling.

## Coverage uniformity

- Assessing the evenness of coverage across the genome helps identify regions with low or high coverage, which can impact the reliability of variant detection and quantification.

## Mapping quality

- Evaluating the mapping quality of reads to a reference genome helps ensure proper alignment. Low mapping quality may indicate issues such as contamination, misalignment, or the presence of repetitive elements.

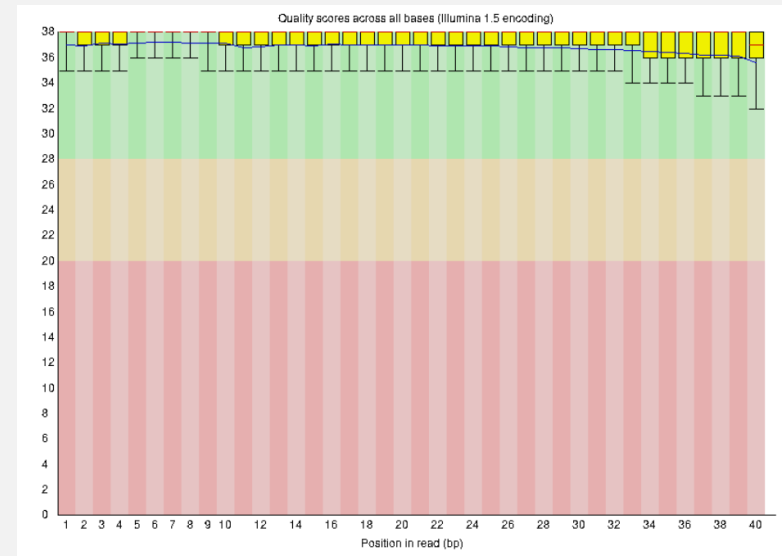
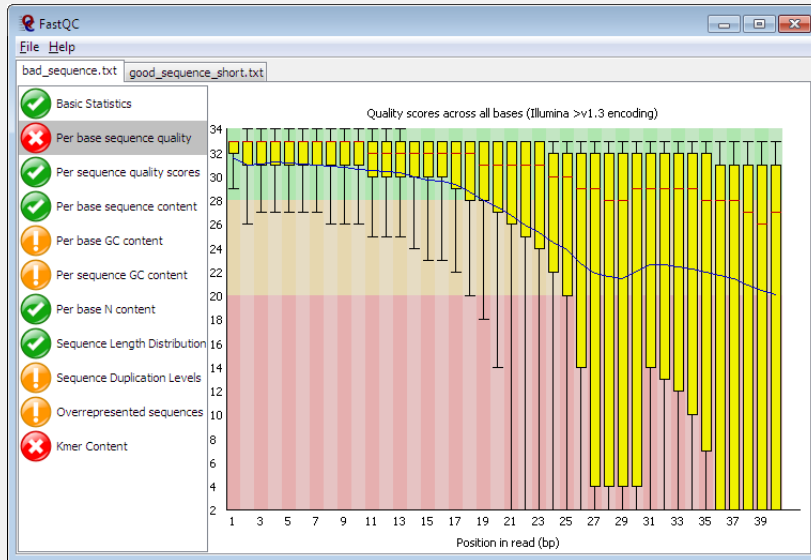
## Ref genome consistency

- Verifying that the sequencing data aligns well with the chosen reference genome is important to identify potential issues such as contamination or misidentification of the reference.

# FastQC, a sequencing quality control tool

Get FastQC at

<https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc>







# Sequencing coverage

Coverage = # bases sequenced / Size of sequenced region

The value represents how many times, on average, each base in the target region has been sequenced

# Good to read

Illumina sequencing technology.

[https://www.illumina.com/documents/products/techspotlights/techspotlight\\_sequencing.pdf](https://www.illumina.com/documents/products/techspotlights/techspotlight_sequencing.pdf)

FastQC.

<https://www.bioinformatics.babraham.ac.uk/projects/fastqc>