

# Intro and Best Practices: RNA-Seq

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INTRODUCTION TO RNA-SEQ DATA ANALYSIS

BTEP SERIES 2017

# RNA-Seq Applications

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## Differential Gene Expression

- Looks at genes that are at least at the detection limit of microarrays
- Most straightforward, requires less read depth (10-30 M reads)
- Can be more cost-effective than microarrays

## Differential Transcript Expression (Isoform switching)

- Still confined to known transcripts / isoforms
- Complexity is in the assignment of exons to particular isoforms
- Many algorithms can differ in results

## Transcript Discovery / Whole Transcriptome Profiling

- Interest is in looking for new isoforms or unannotated genes
- More complex in terms of bioinformatics analysis
- Can find false positives, depending on leniency of algorithm

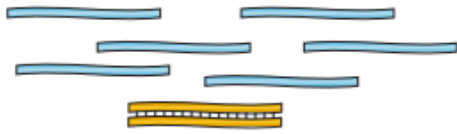
## Others

- SNP/Somatic Variant/Gene Fusion Detection

# Method – Preparation

## a Data generation

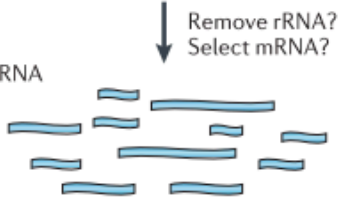
① mRNA or total RNA



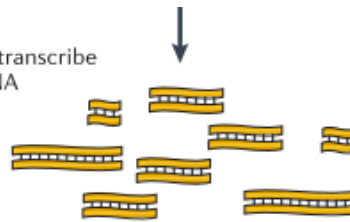
② Remove contaminant DNA



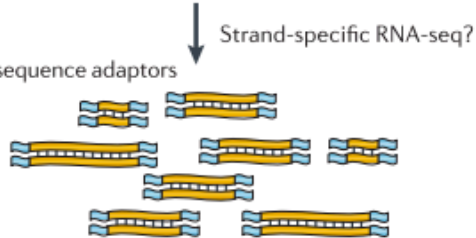
③ Fragment RNA



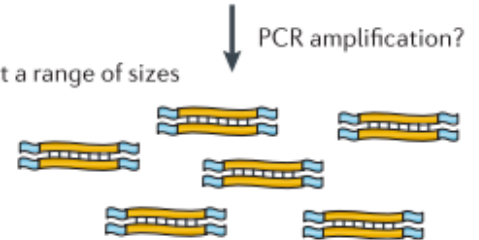
④ Reverse transcribe into cDNA



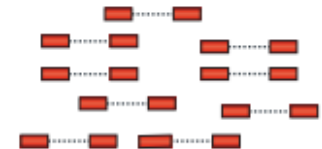
⑤ Ligate sequence adaptors



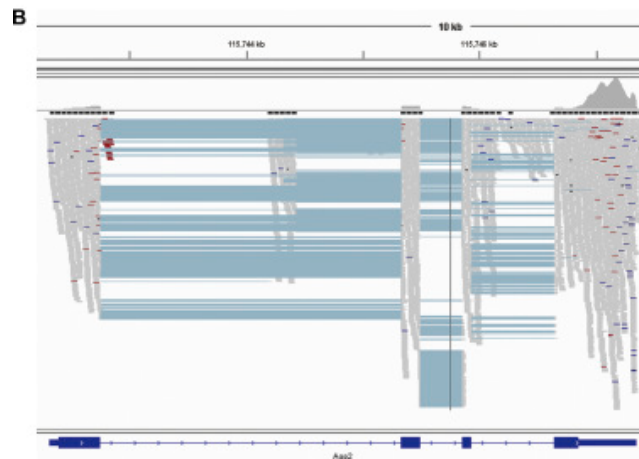
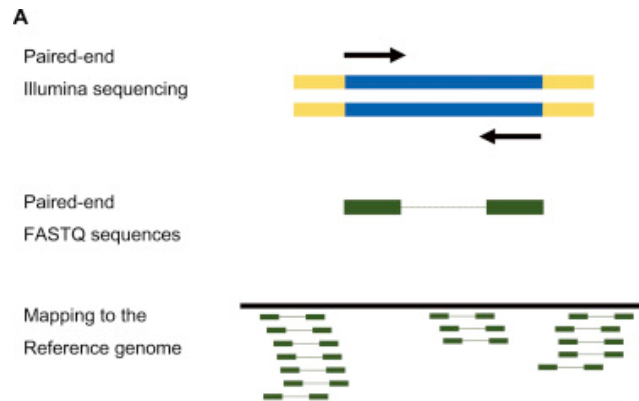
⑥ Select a range of sizes



⑦ Sequence cDNA ends



# Paired-end Sequencing





# Which method?

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## Library Prep and Array Kit Selector\*

This tool will help you determine the best kit for your needs based on your project type, starting material, and the method or application.

\*Please Note: [NovaSeq Series](#) recommendations coming soon to this selector tool.

Please select your project type :

Research Use Only



Molecular Diagnostics



<https://www.illumina.com/library-prep-array-kit-selector.html>

# Which RNA type?

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## Library Kits available:

**mRNA**

**Whole Transcriptome**

Targeted

miRNA

Low Input

Ribosomal Profiling

# Which library method?

	<b>TruSeq RNA v2</b>	<b>TruSeq Stranded mRNA</b>	<b>TruSeq RNA Access</b>
Input Amount	0.1 – 1ug High Quality Total RNA	NeoPrep: 25-100ng	10ng High Quality Total RNA
FFPE Compatible	No	No	Yes
Capture Method	Oligo dT beads capture poly-A tail	Oligo dT beads capture poly-A tail	Capture probes targeting coding RNA sequence
Capture Content	Coding Transcriptome	Coding Transcriptome	Coding Transcriptome

# Which library method?

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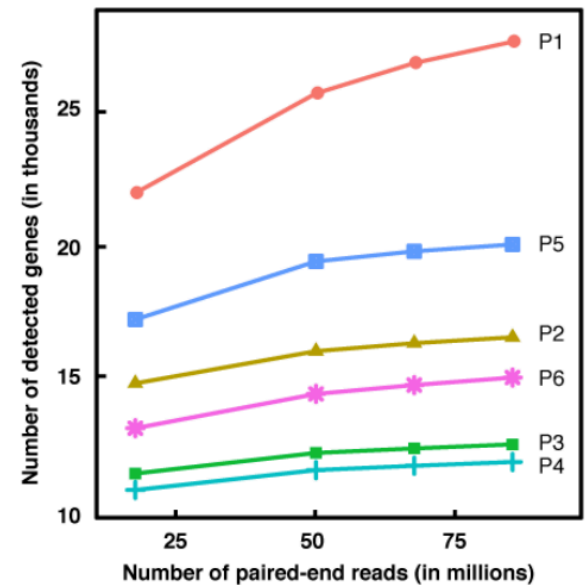
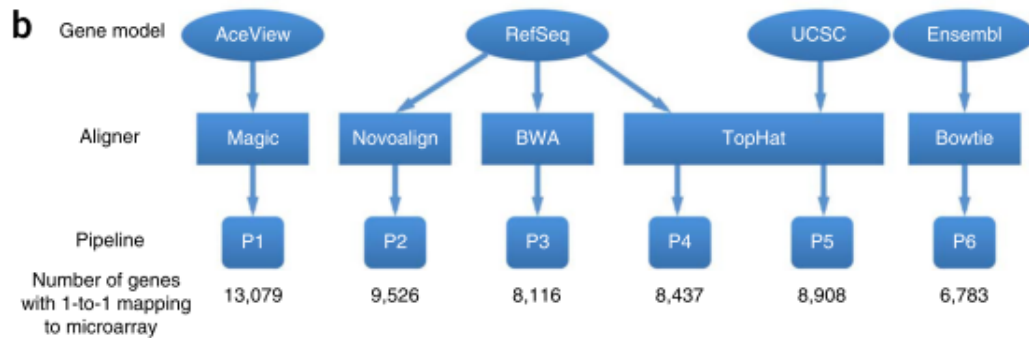
	<b>TruSeq Stranded Total RNA Ribo-Zero H/M/R</b>	<b>Clontech SMART-Seq v4 Ultra Low Input RNA Kit + Nextera XT</b>
Input Amount	0.1–1 µg of total RNA (mid to high-quality)	1–1,000 intact cells (or as little as 10 pg–10 ng of total RNA)
FFPE Compatible	Yes	No
Capture Method	RT + Random Primers	cDNA Synthesis Using Template Switching Technology
Capture Content	Coding and Non-coding Transcriptome	Coding Transcriptome

# Cost:

	HiSeq 2500	HiSeq 3000
Raw reads per lane	400 M	600 M
Cost/sample*		
mRNA-Seq: 20 M PE	18 samples/lane:  \$126 + \$100 = \$226	27 samples/ lane:  \$58 + \$100 = \$158 (75 bp) \$73 + \$100 = \$173 (150 bp)
Total RNA-Seq: 60 M PE	6 samples/lane:  \$378 + \$126 = \$500	9 samples/lane:  \$175 + \$126 = \$300 (75 bp) \$244 + \$126 = \$370 (150 bp)

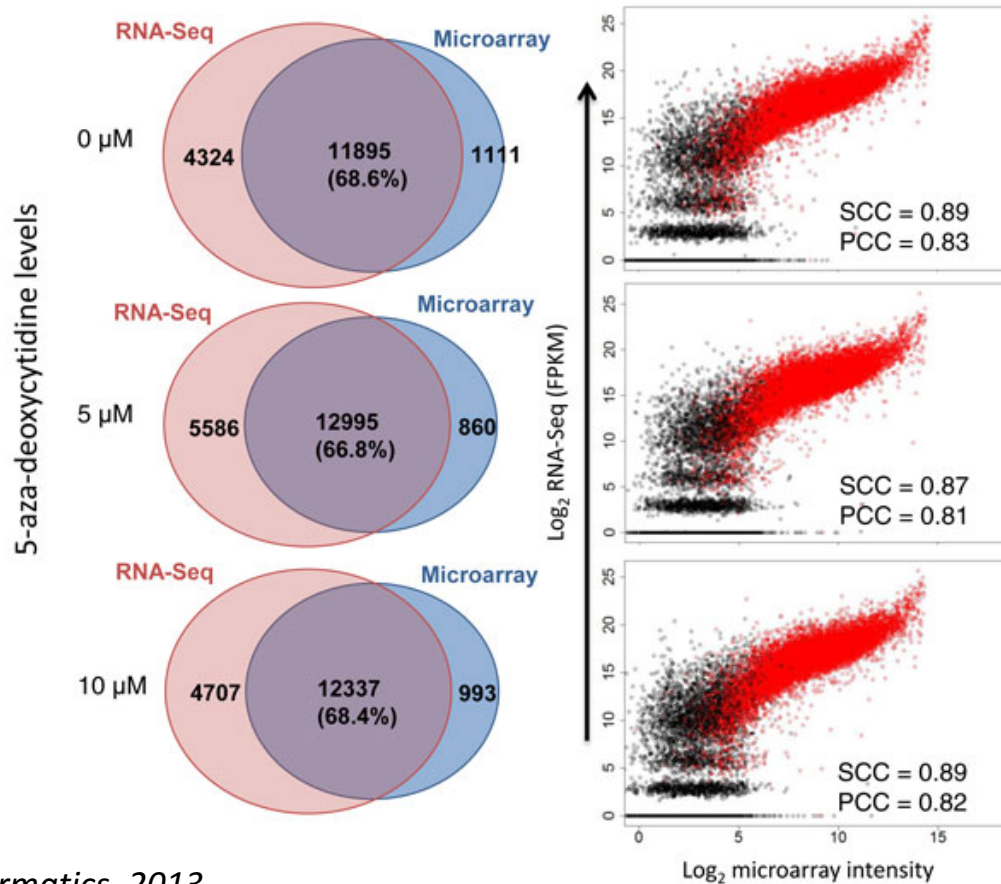
*\*Cost doesn't include 33% CCR subsidy*

# What sequencing depth is enough?



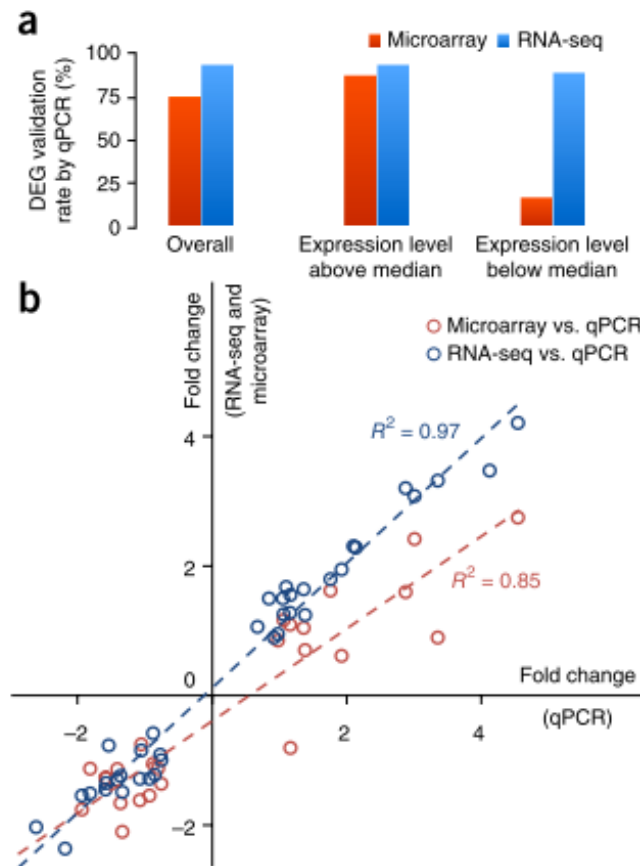
Wang et al, Nature Biotechnology, 2014

# Comparison between Microarray and RNA-Seq



Xu et al, BMC Bioinformatics, 2013

# Comparison between Affymetrix, RNA-Seq and qPCR



Wang et al, Nature Biotechnology, 2014



# RNA-Seq or Microarray?

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Current configuration for running samples on HiSeq 2500:

**Whole Transcriptome profiling:** Ribo-Zero

~25-50M PE reads  
(6-12 samples/lane)

**mRNA Profiling:**

~10-20M PE reads  
(18-36 samples/lane)

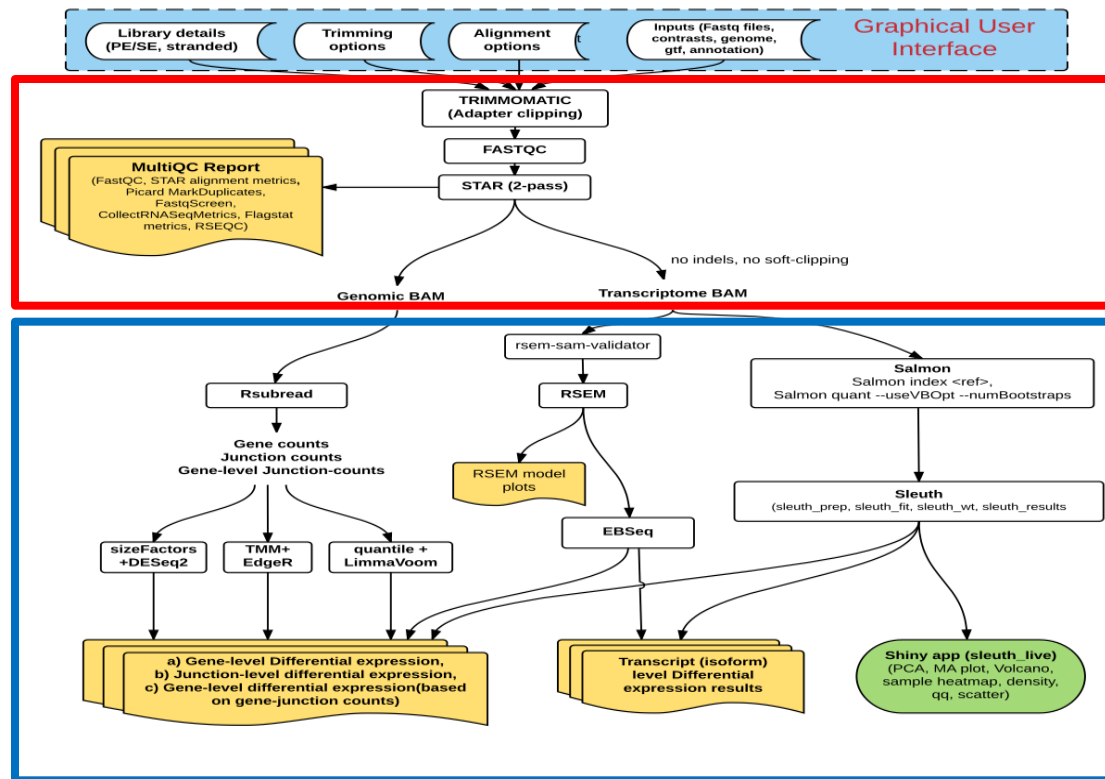
**Microarray**

- Pathways
- Genes or known transcripts
- Well-expressed

**RNA-Seq**

- Full transcriptome analysis
- Rare transcripts
- Splice variants
- Fusion transcripts

# RNA-Seq Pipeline Workflow: CCBR Pipeliner



STEP 1: INITIAL QC

STEP 2: COUNTING & DEG

# Data Types

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## Raw Reads:

- Fastq files: usually in .gz format

## Aligned Reads:

- SAM: Sequence Alignment/Map format
- BAM: binary version of SAM
- BAI: BAM index (for fast retrieval of BAM reads)

## QC Report: MultiQC Report

- FastQC
- RSeQC
- Samtools
- Picard

## Gene Counts and Differentially Expressed Genes (DEG) Reports

# A good review:

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Conesa *et al. Genome Biology* (2016) 17:13  
DOI 10.1186/s13059-016-0881-8

Genome Biology

REVIEW

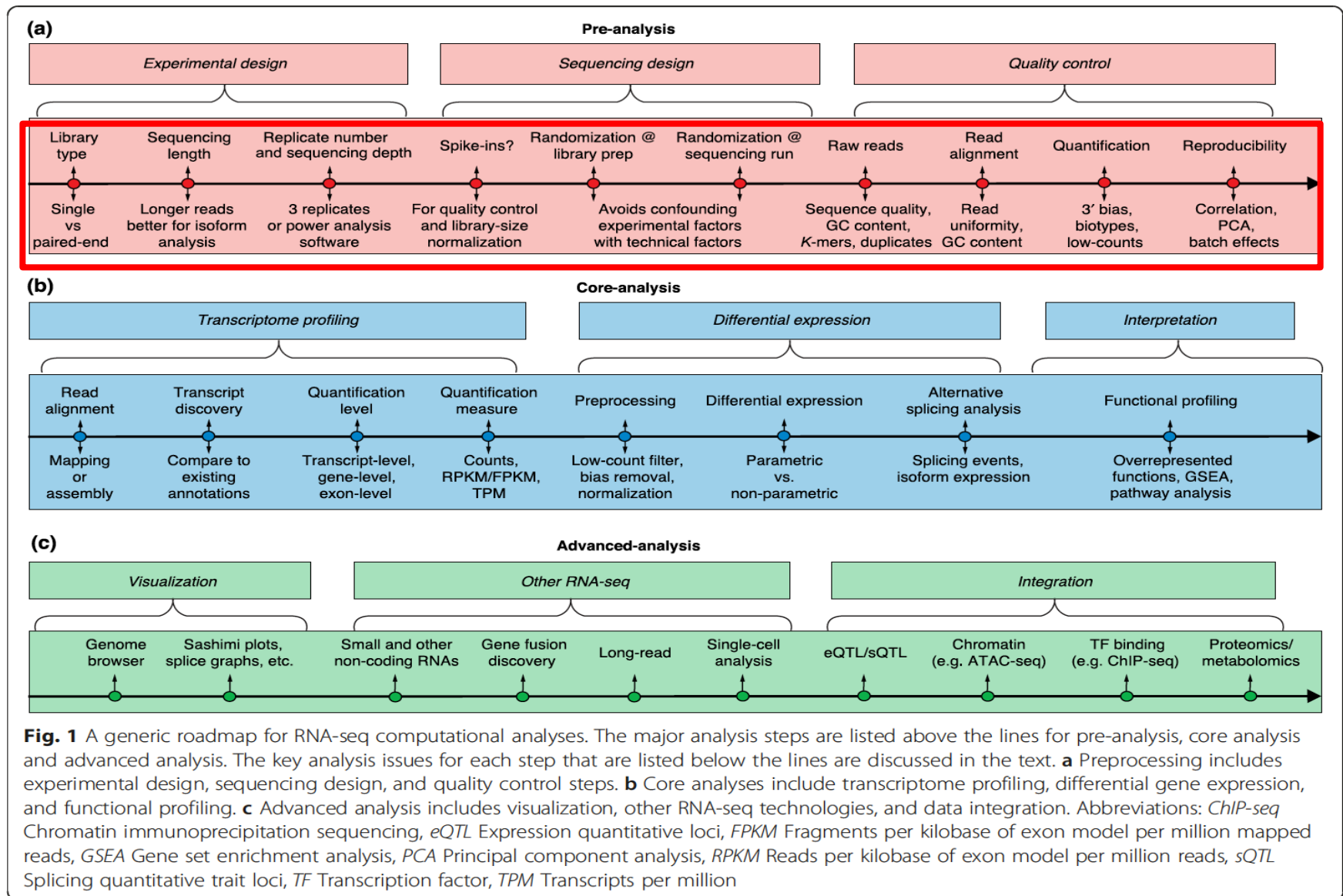
Open Access

## A survey of best practices for RNA-seq data analysis



Ana Conesa<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Pedro Madrigal<sup>3,4\*</sup>, Sonia Tarazona<sup>2,5</sup>, David Gomez-Cabrero<sup>6,7,8,9</sup>, Alejandra Cervera<sup>10</sup>, Andrew McPherson<sup>11</sup>, Michał Wojciech Szczęśniak<sup>12</sup>, Daniel J. Gaffney<sup>3</sup>, Laura L. Elo<sup>13</sup>, Xuegong Zhang<sup>14,15</sup> and Ali Mortazavi<sup>16,17\*</sup>

# Generic roadmap for expt design & analysis



# Pre-Alignment QC:

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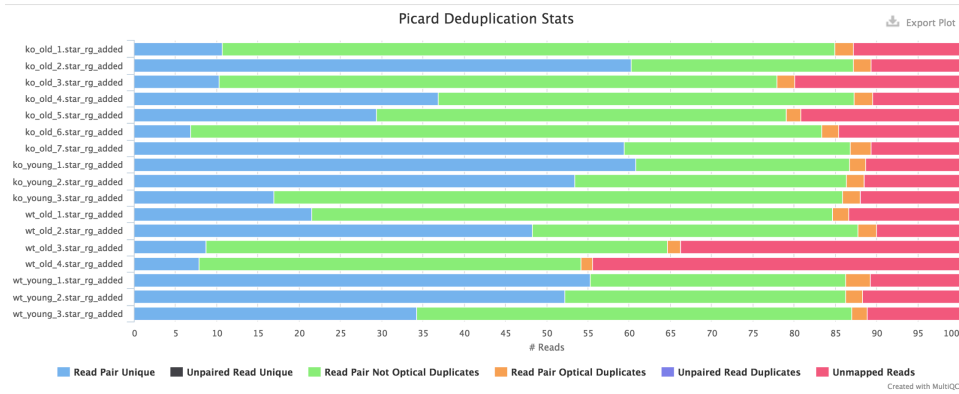
Quality control for the raw reads involves

1. analysis of sequence quality
2. GC content
3. presence of adaptors
4. overrepresented *k*-mers
5. duplicated reads in order to detect sequencing errors, PCR artifacts or contaminations

# Pre-alignment QC: FastQC

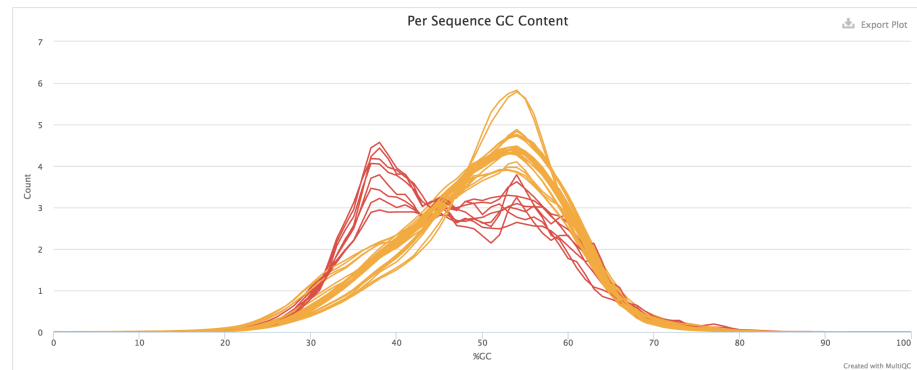


# Duplication Rates



High duplication rates

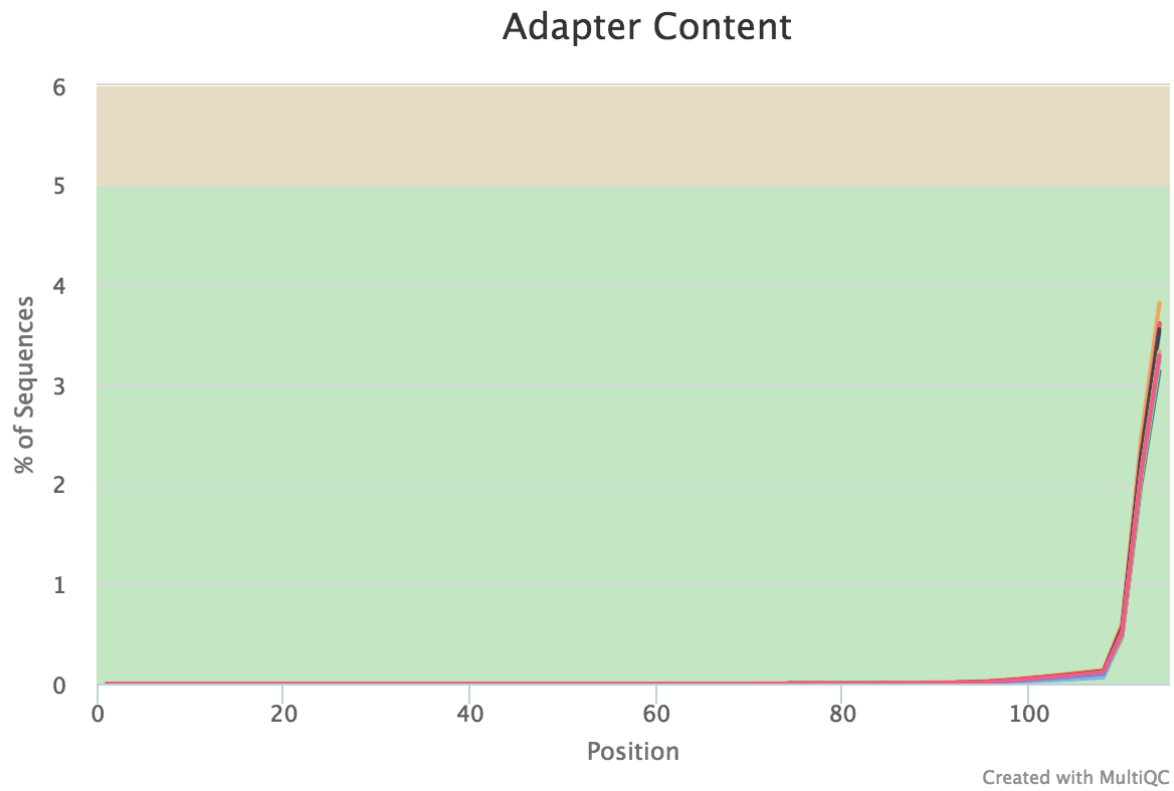
GC Bias



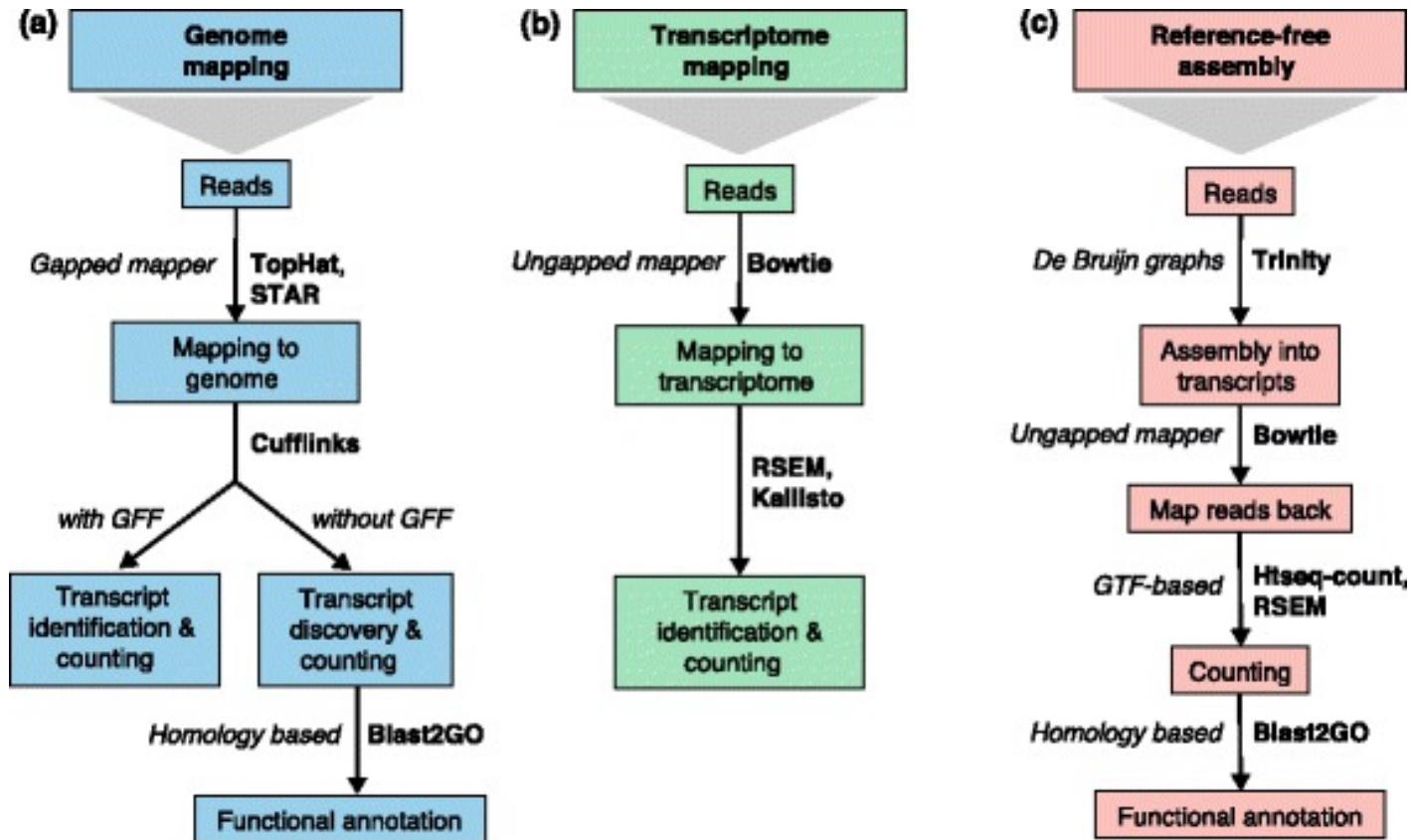


# Adapter Content

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# Alignment methods



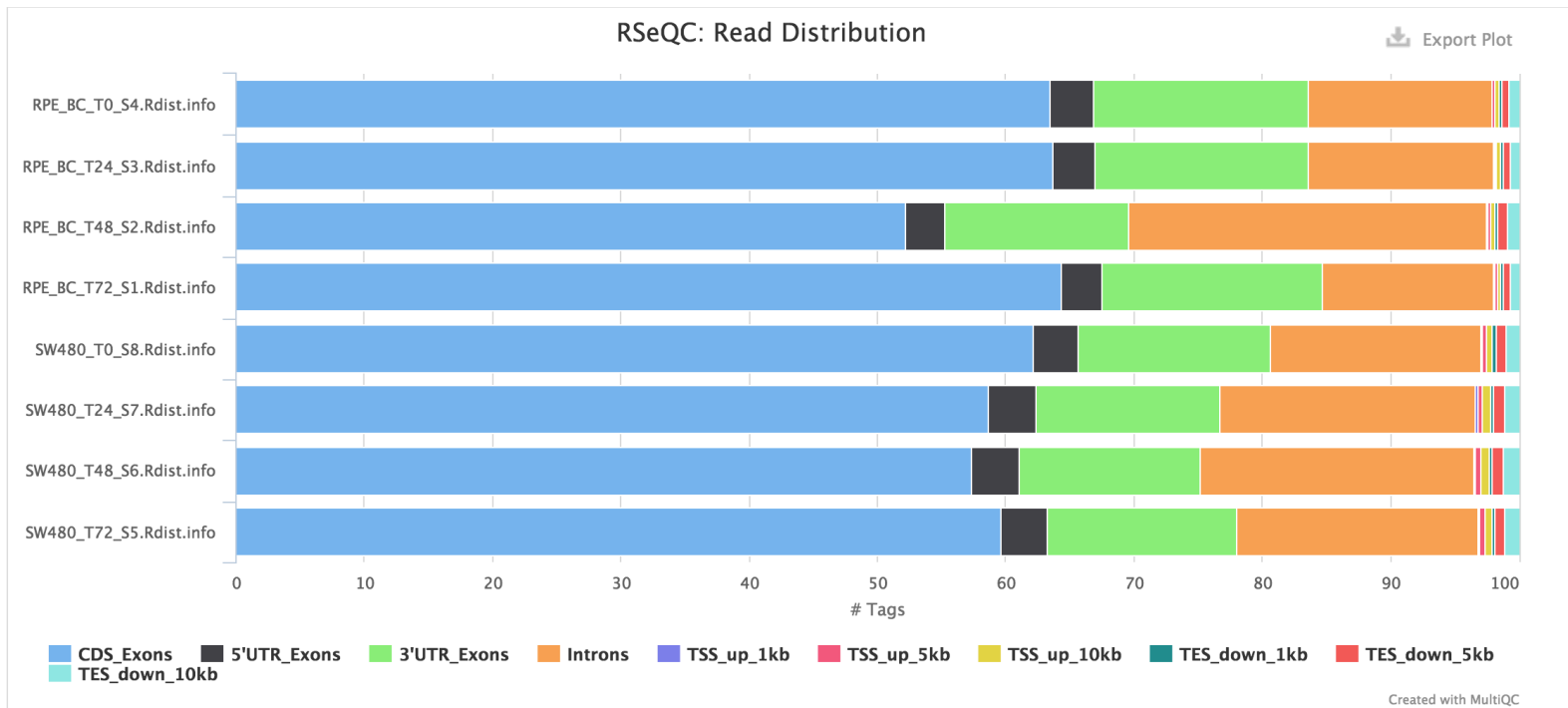
# Post-alignment QC:

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## QC Metrics:

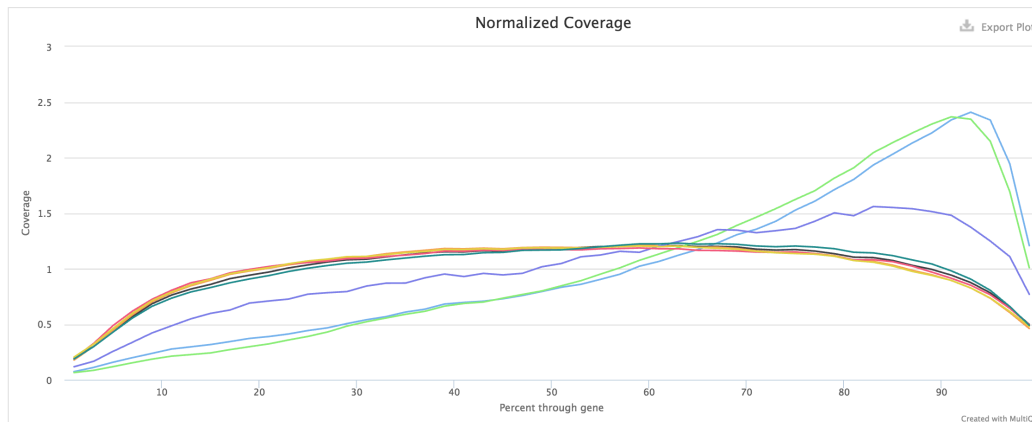
1. Alignment percentage: between 70 and 90 % of regular RNA-seq reads to map onto the human genome (depending on the read mapper used)
2. Uniformity of read coverage on exons and the mapped strand
3. Reproducibility among replicates and for possible batch effects (PCA)
4. Contamination: rRNA and microbial RNAs should not be present

# Post-alignment QC: RSeQC



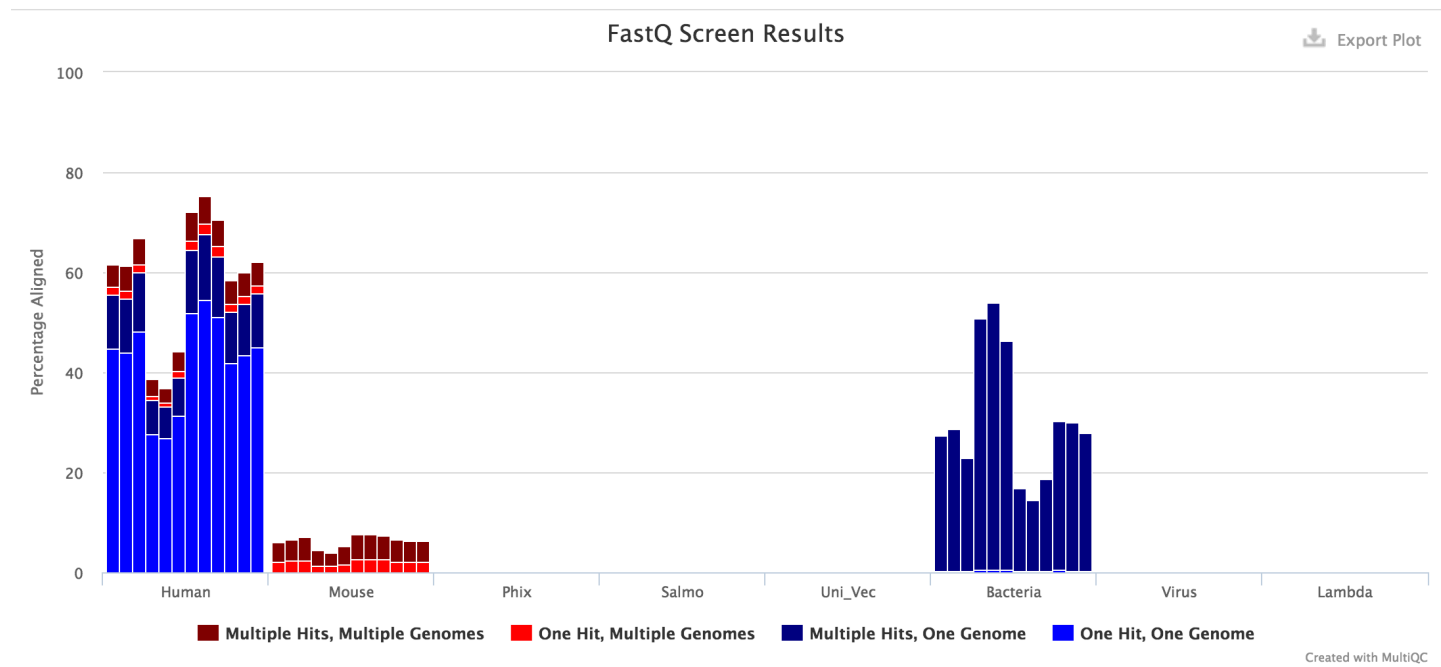
# QC: Poor RNA Quality (RIN > 7, for FFPE or degraded, use total RNA-Seq)

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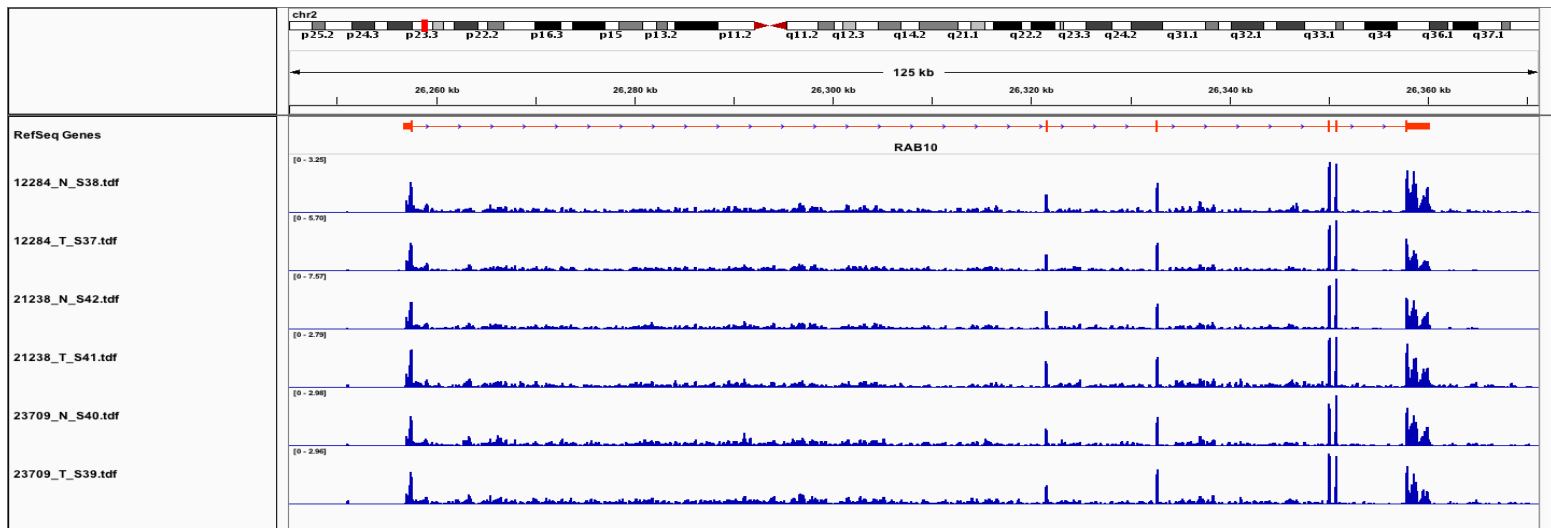


Degraded RNA showing  
3' bias in coverage

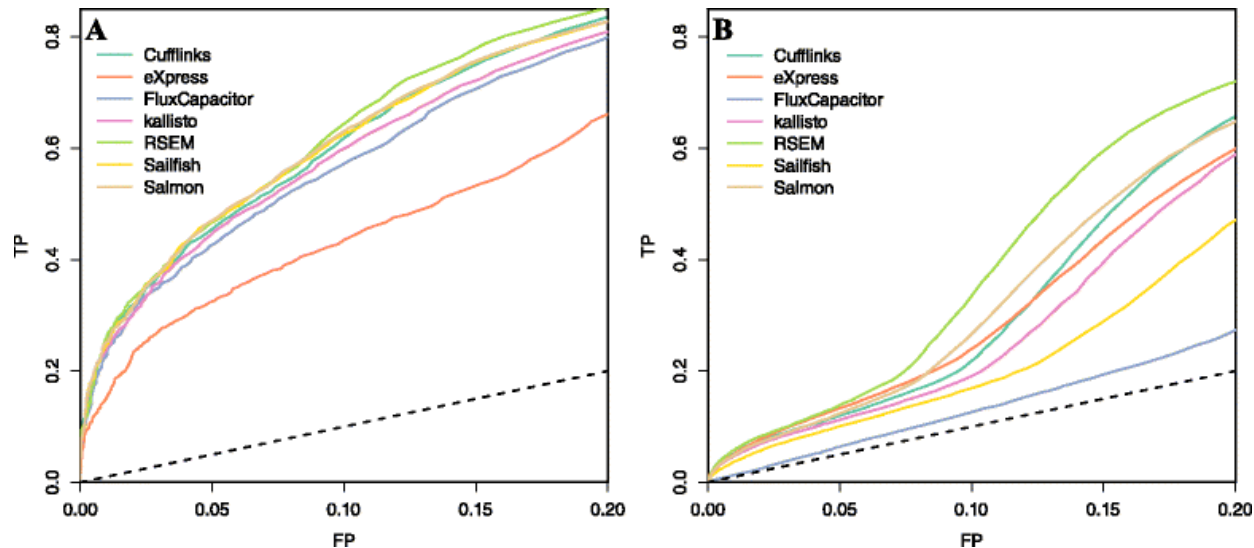
# QC: Contamination



# Intronic Reads



# Which gene-counting method?

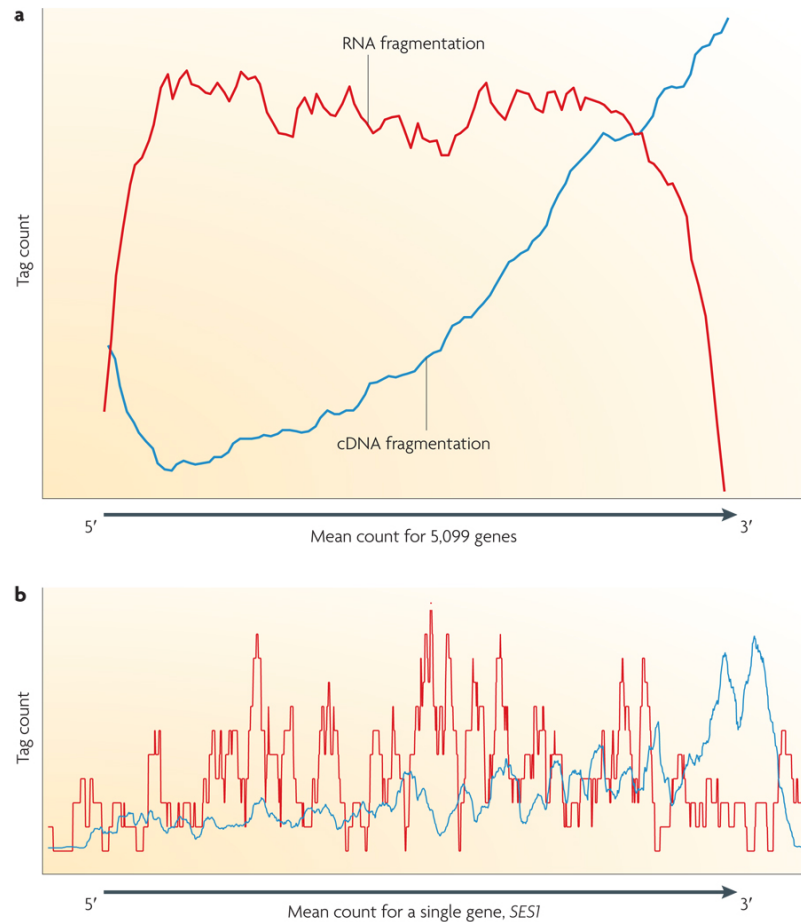


*“Using two independent datasets, we assessed seven competing pipelines. Performance was generally poor, with two methods clearly underperforming and RSEM slightly outperforming the rest.”*

*Teng, et al. A benchmark for RNA-seq quantification pipelines  
[Genome Biol.](#) 2016; 17: 74.*



# Gene coverage for short reads



# Gene Expression Data

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## Not Normalized:

- Raw Counts: number of reads that align to a particular feature

## Normalized:

- CPM (or log CPM): Counts per Million Reads
  - For relative gene expression

## Within-sample Normalization:

- RPKM: Reads per Kilobase exon per Million Reads
  - For single-end reads
- FPKM: Fragments per Kilobase exon per Million Reads
  - For paired-end reads
- TPM: Transcripts per base normalized by all transcripts per base per Million
  - estimated fraction of transcripts made up by a given isoform or gene

# Normalization methods

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1. **Total count (TC)**: Gene counts are divided by the total number of mapped reads (or library size) associated with their lane and multiplied by the mean total count across all the samples of the dataset.
2. **Upper Quartile (UQ)**: Very similar in principle to TC, the total counts are replaced by the upper quartile of counts different from 0 in the computation of the normalization factors.
3. **Median (Med)**: Also similar to TC, the total counts are replaced by the median counts different from 0 in the computation of the normalization factors.
4. **DESeq**: This normalization method is included in the DESeq Bioconductor package, using a "reference sample" by taking, for each gene, the geometric mean of the counts in all samples.
5. **Trimmed Mean of *M*-values (TMM)**: Trimmed mean of *M* values (TMM) between each pair of samples. This normalization method is implemented in the edgeR Bioconductor package.
6. **Quantile (Q)**: First proposed in the context of microarray data, this normalization method consists in matching distributions of gene counts across lanes.
7. **Reads Per Kilobase per Million mapped reads (RPKM)**: This approach was initially introduced to facilitate comparisons between genes within a sample and combines between- and within-sample normalization.

# Methods for Quantification and Differential Gene Expression

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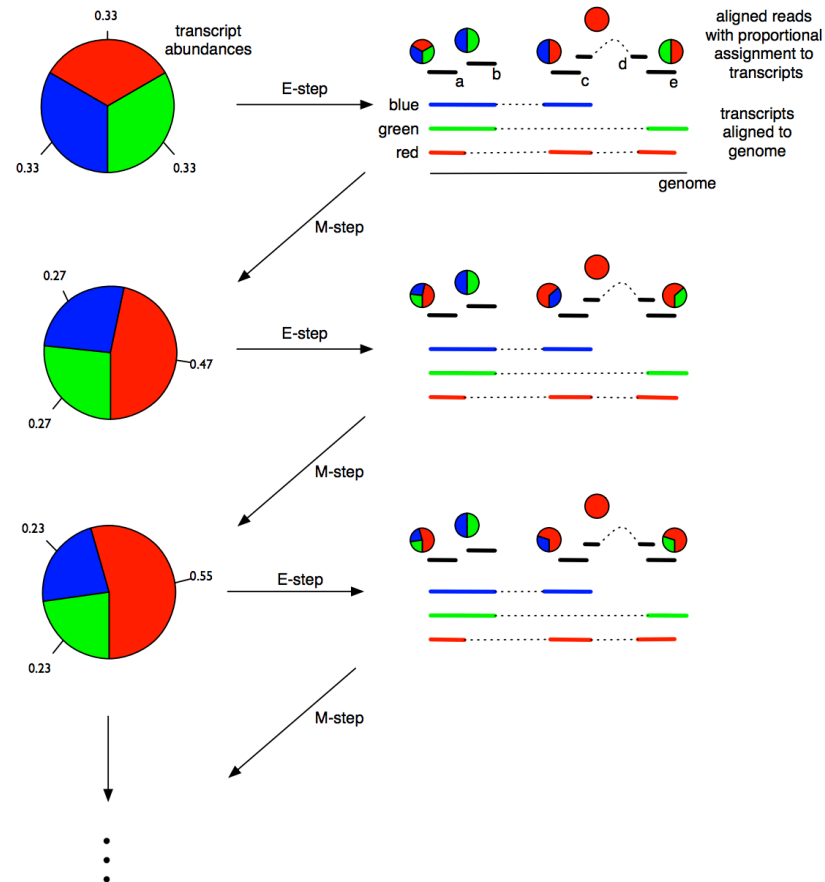
## 1. Raw counts:

- Gene level: subread, HTSeq

## 2. Normalized counts and DEG:

- Gene level: EdgeR, DESeq2, Limma-voom, RSEM
- Transcript level: RSEM, Salmon, Kallisto, Sailfish

# Expectation Maximization



# Splice Variant Quantification

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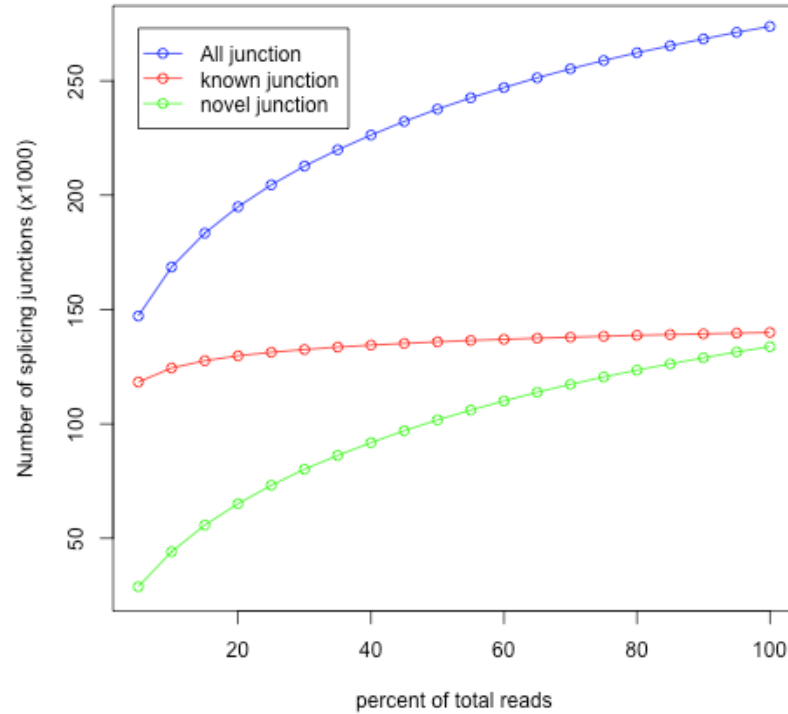
Either with a reference or de novo, the complete reconstruction of transcriptomes using short-read Illumina technology remains a challenging problem, and in many cases de novo assembly results in tens or hundreds of contigs accounting for fragmented transcripts.

Emerging long-read technologies, such as SMRT from Pacific Biosciences, provide reads that are long enough to sequence complete transcripts for most genes

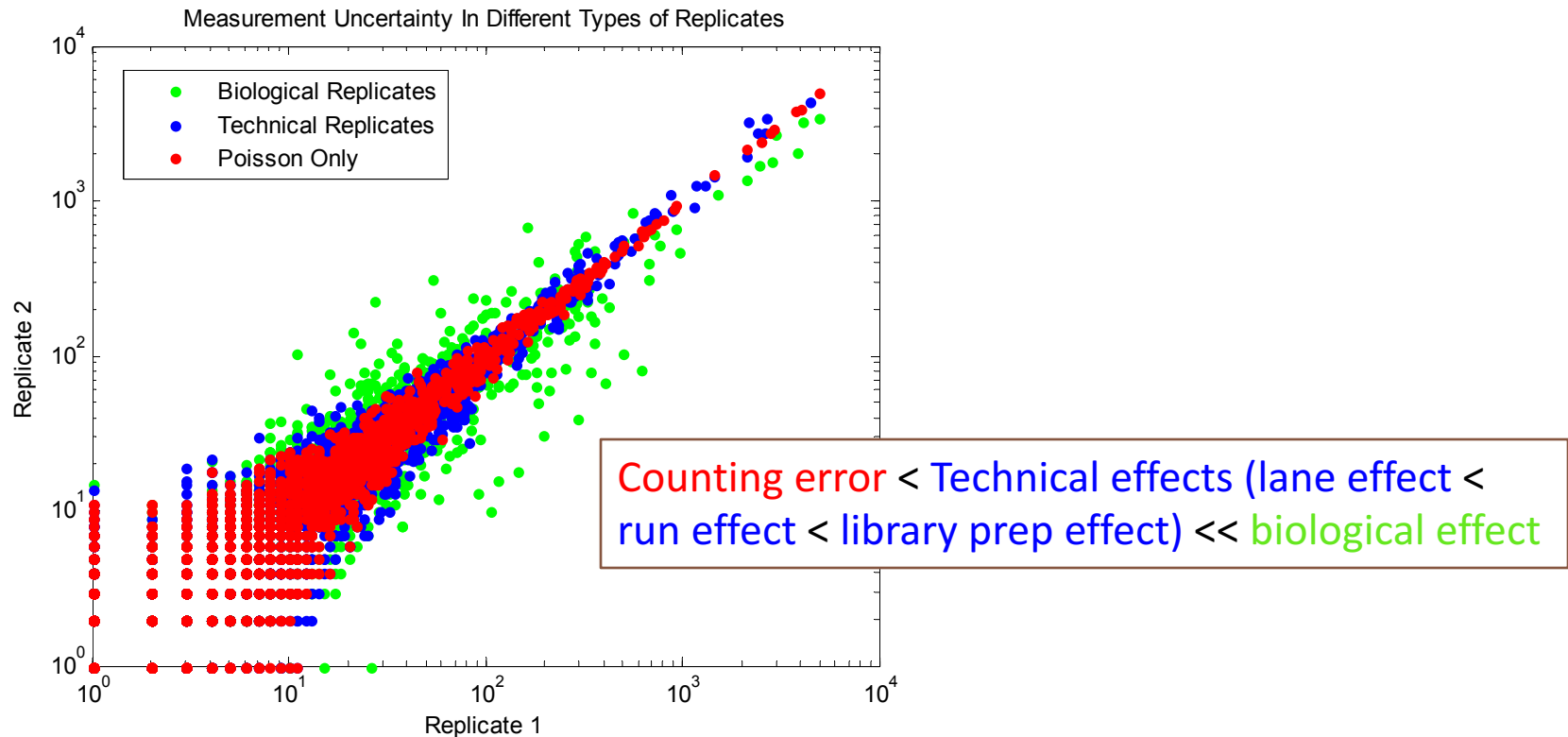
*Conesa et al., Genome Biol. 2016*

# Junction Counts

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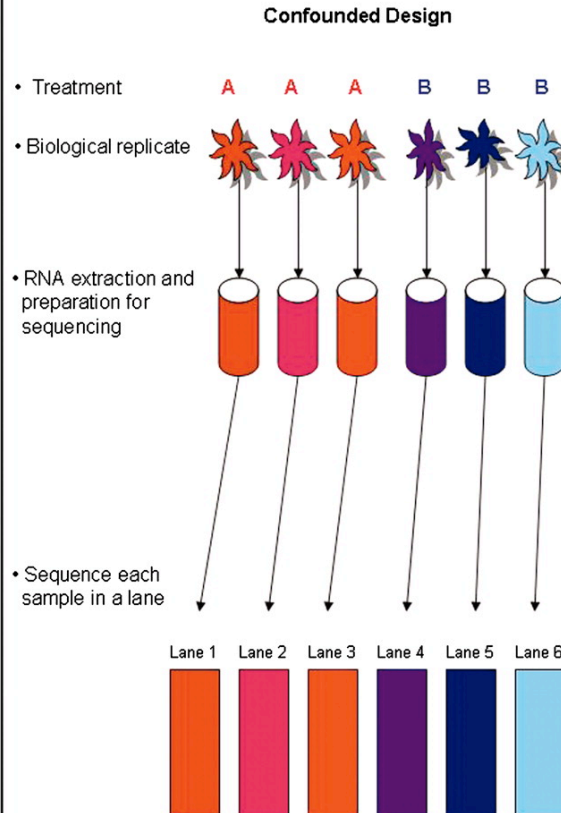
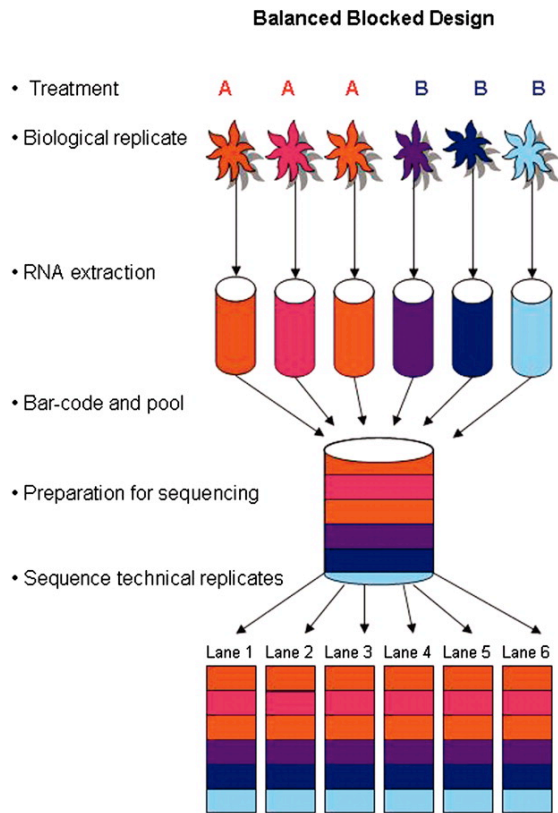
# Types of variance



*Busby et al, Bioinformatics 2013*  
*Marioni et al, Genome Res 2008*



# Experimental Design: avoiding lane effects

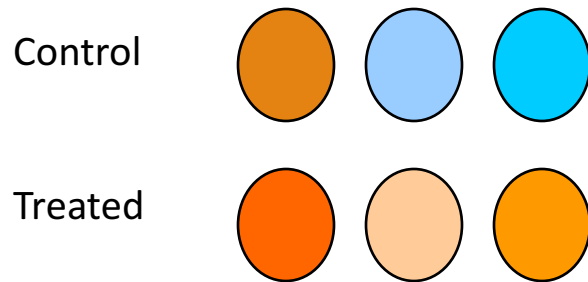


*- does not permit partitioning of batch and lane effects from the estimate of within-group biological variability*

*Auer and Doerge, Genetics 2010*

# What happens when I run a single sample per treatment group?

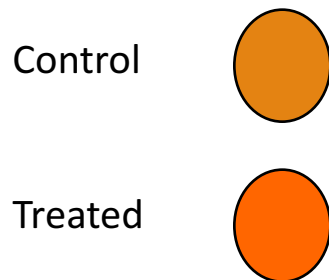
## 3 Biological Replicates



### Sorted by p-value

- lowest p values signify genes that are stable (low within group variance)
- can set false positive/false negative rate cutoffs
- can prioritize genes for validation
- more expensive up front but can cut down cost (time and resources) in the long run

## No Replicates

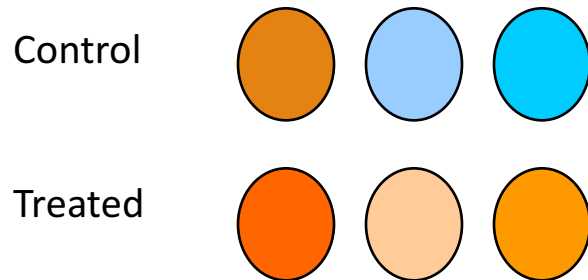


### Sorted by fold change

- could be a highly variable gene with no biological relevance at all
- no idea of false positive/false negative rate
- might need to validate larger number of genes on replicate samples (more effort downstream)
- inexpensive, but likely to be more costly (time and resources) in the long run

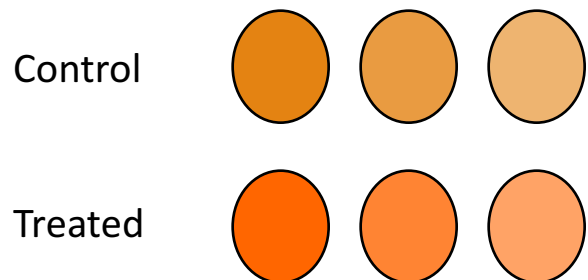
# Consequences of running biological vs. technical replicates

## 3 Biological Replicates



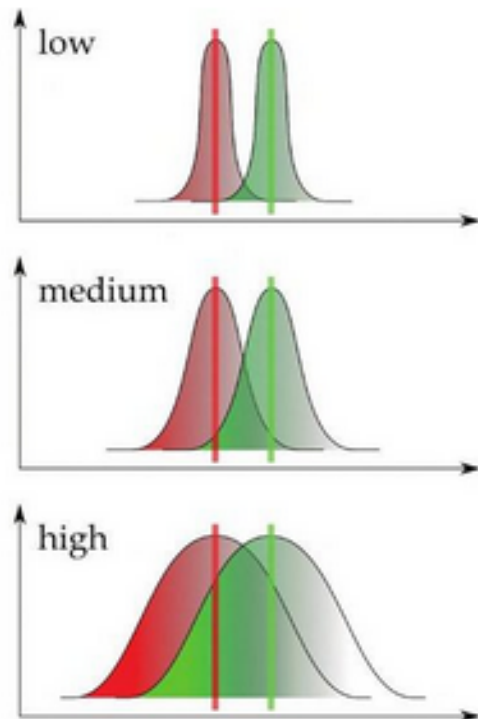
- Captures variation among individuals, animals, culture conditions
- Larger variance within each group
- Larger p values (fewer significant genes)
- Decreased false positive rates
- Higher validation/reproducibility rate

## 3 Technical Replicates



- Captures variation secondary to array or sample processing conditions
- Small variance within each group
- Smaller p values (more significant genes)
- Increased false positive rates (not capturing true biological variation)
- Lower validation/reproducibility rate

# Statistical Tests



*Statistical tests provide p values, which are a measure of whether they are significant or not*

		Truly differentially expressed?	
		Yes	No
Statistically significant?	Yes	True Positive (TP)	False Positive (FP)
	No	False Negative (FN)	True Negative (TN)
		Sensitivity = $TP / (TP + FN)$	Specificity = $TN / (FP + TN)$

**2 types of error:**

**Type 1 error:** Calling a gene change statistically significant when it is not ( $\alpha$ ), false positive

**Type 2 error:** Calling a gene not significantly changed when it is ( $\beta$ ), false negative

# Samples vs Read depth

If on a tight budget, deciding between number of replicates vs sequencing depth, always higher replicates with lower sequencing depth leads to higher statistical power

- 3M reads x 10 replicates = 30M reads yields 52% power
- 10M reads x 3 replicates = 30M reads yields 33% power

**Table 1** Statistical power to detect differential expression varies with effect size, sequencing depth and number of replicates

	Replicates per group		
	3	5	10
Effect size (fold change)			
1.25	17 %	25 %	44 %
1.5	43 %	64 %	91 %
2	87 %	98 %	100 %
Sequencing depth (millions of reads)			
3	19 %	29 %	52 %
10	33 %	51 %	80 %
15	38 %	57 %	85 %

Example of calculations for the probability of detecting differential expression in a single test at a significance level of 5 %, for a two-group comparison using a Negative Binomial model, as computed by the RNASeqPower package of Hart et al. [190]. For a fixed within-group variance (package default value), the statistical power increases with the difference between the two groups (effect size), the sequencing depth, and the number of replicates per group. This table shows the statistical power for a gene with 70 aligned reads, which was the median coverage for a protein-coding gene for one whole-blood RNA-seq sample with 30 million aligned reads from the GTEx Project [214]

# Best Practices

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1. Factor in at least 3 replicates (absolute minimum), but 4 if possible (optimum minimum). Biological replicates are recommended rather than technical replicates.

2. Always process your RNA extractions at the same time. Extractions done at different times lead to unwanted batch effects.

3. There are 2 major considerations for RNA-Seq libraries:

If you are interested in coding mRNA, you can select to use the mRNA library prep. The recommended sequencing depth is between **10-20M paired-end (PE)** reads. Your RNA has to be high quality (RIN > 8).

If you are interested in long noncoding RNA as well, you can select the total RNA method, with sequencing depth **~25-60M PE** reads. This is also an option if your RNA is degraded.

4. Ideally to avoid lane batch effects, all samples would need to be multiplexed together and run on the same lane. This may require an initial MiSeq run for library balancing. Additional lanes can be run if more sequencing depth is needed.

5. If you are unable to process all your RNA samples together and need to process them in batches, make sure that replicates for each condition are in each batch so that the batch effects can be measured and removed bioinformatically.

<https://bioinformatics.cancer.gov/content/rna-seq>

# CCBR Pipeliner

## (QC Report, DEG Analysis)

**Project Information**

Project Id:  (Examples: CCBR-*nnn*,*Labname* or short project name)

Email address:  (Mandatory field: must use @nih.gov email address)

Flow Cell ID:  (Examples: FlowCellID, Labname, date or short project name)

**Global Settings**

Genome:  Pipeline Family:

**Project Description**  **RNAseq**

Data Directory:

FastQ files Found: 0

Working Directory:

**Options**

Pipeline:

Read Length is

Reads are Unstranded

**Low Abundance Gene Thresholds**

Filter out genes <  read counts in <  samples

**Sample Information**

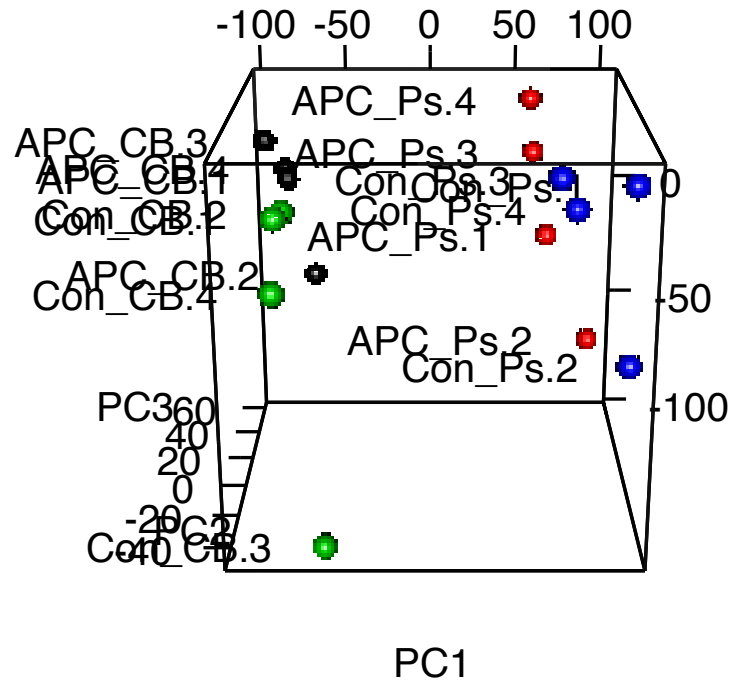
# Validation Methods

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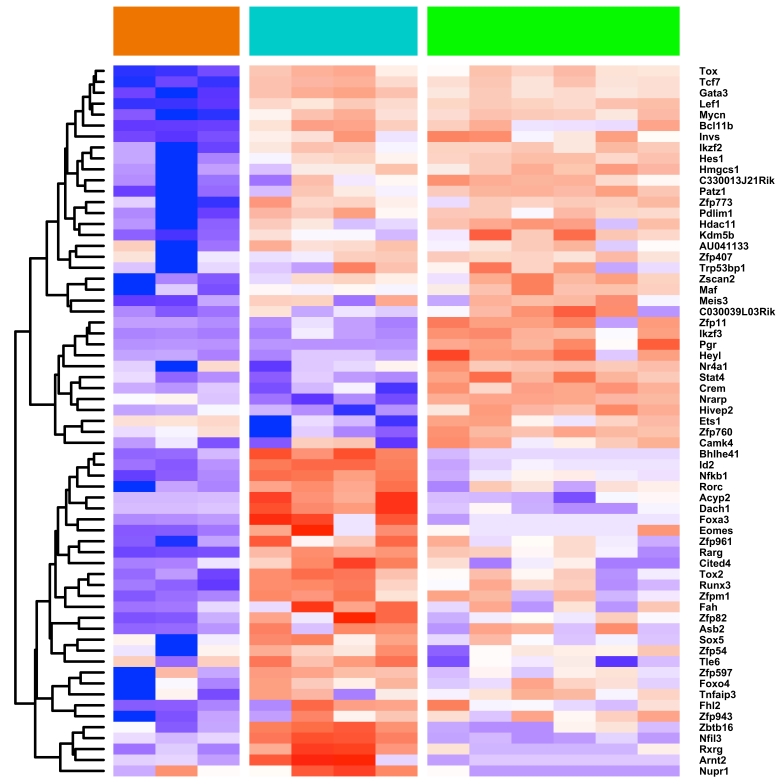
- **Quantitative RT-PCR**
  - well-accepted gold standard
  - housekeeping gene - use microarray data instead of GAPDH, Beta-actin
- **NanoString**
  - Multiplex assay, for several genes simultaneously
  - design based on microarray probes – increase validation
  - especially well-suited for large number of samples
  - use a number of housekeeping genes rather than a single gene
- **FISH**
  - Fluorescence in situ hybridization
  - single cell level
  - Localization especially for heterogeneous samples



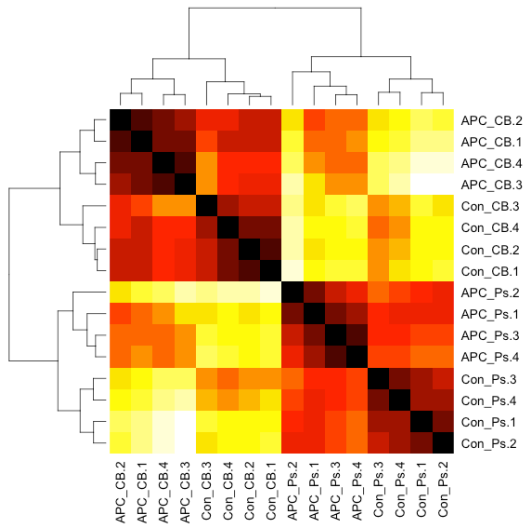
# Visualization: PCA



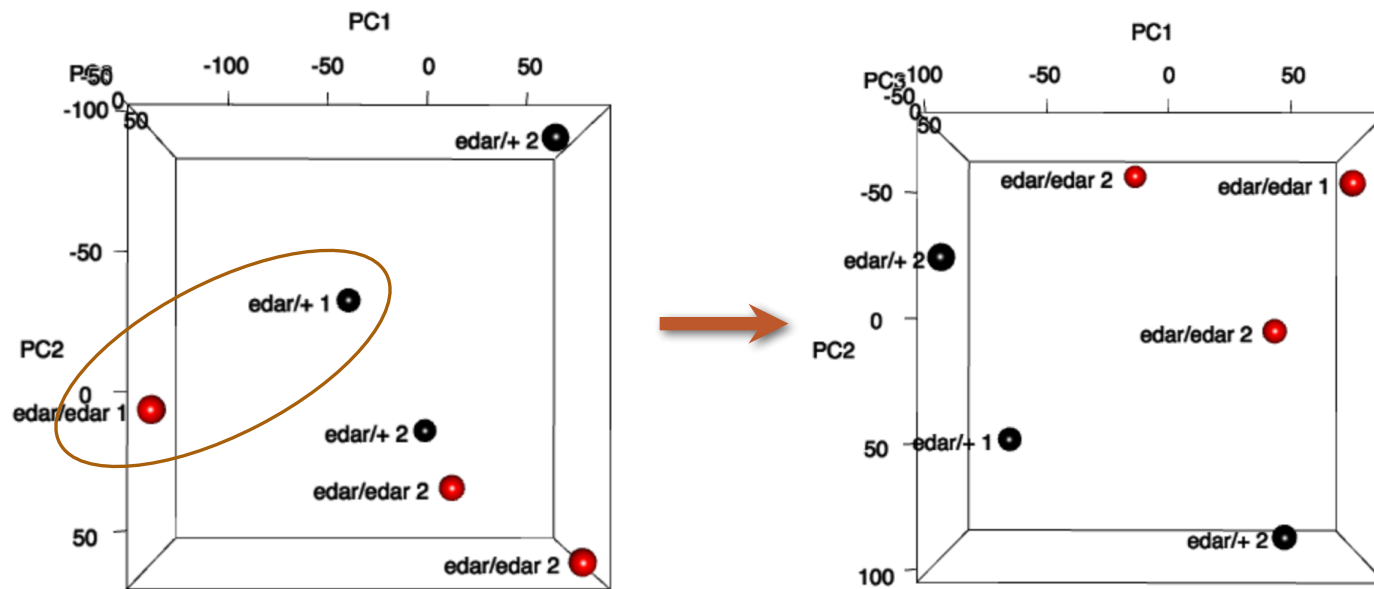
# Visualization: Hierarchical Clustering



# Visualization: Others

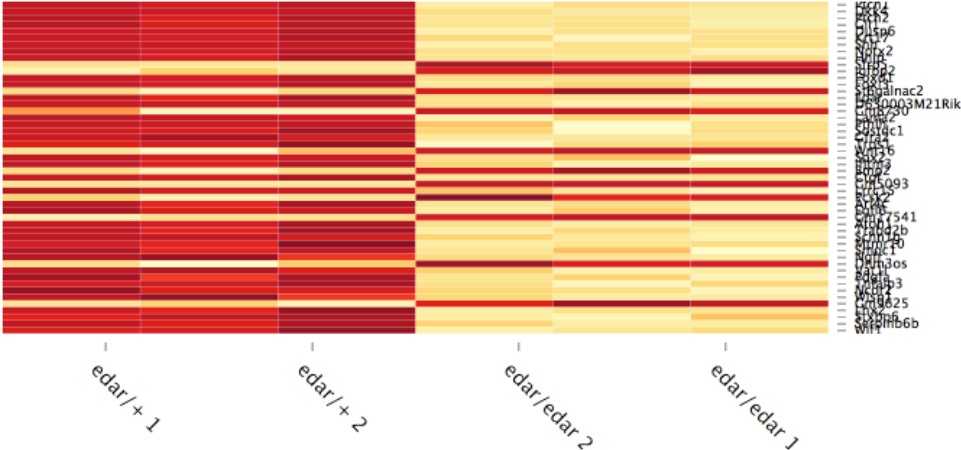
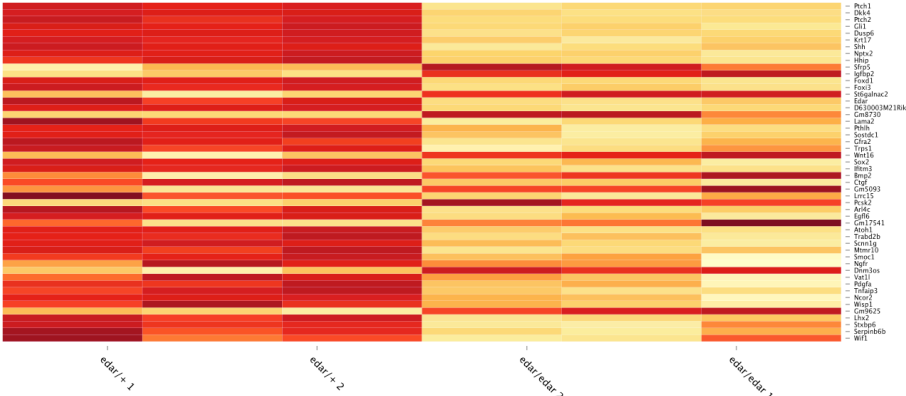


# QC: Batch Effects



Litter effect: used batch removal

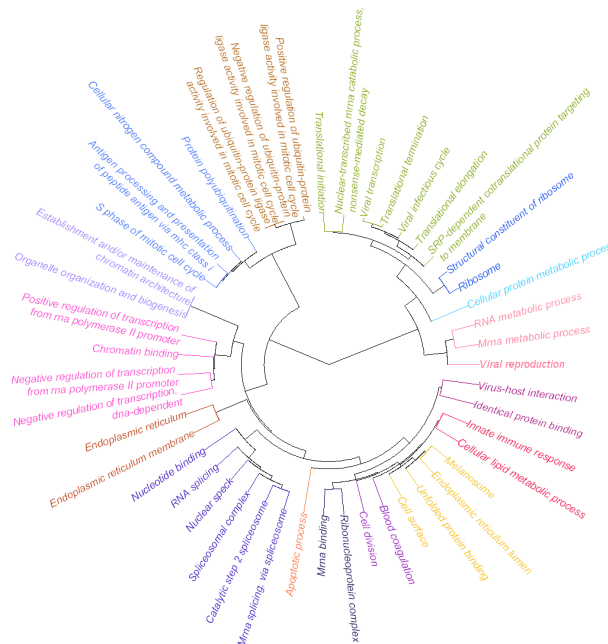
# Visualization: Effect of batch removal



# Gene Ontology Enrichment Analysis

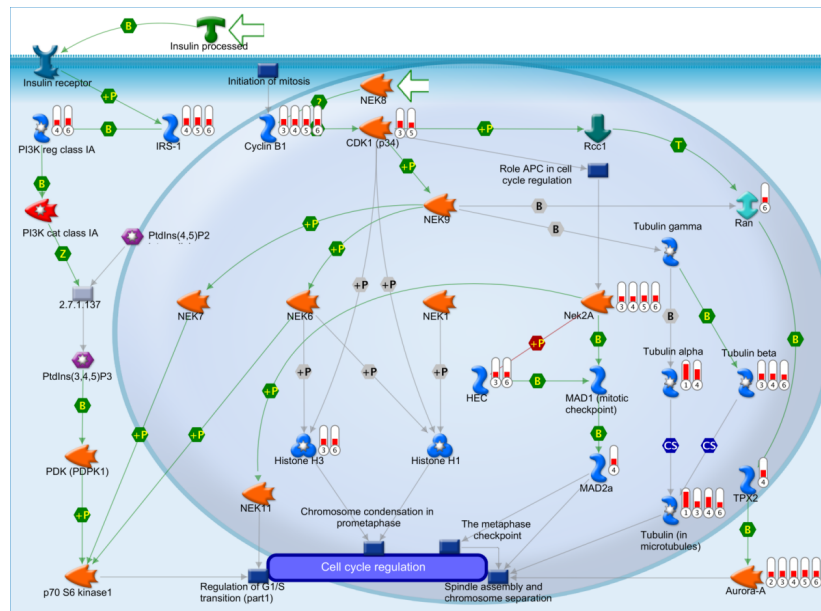
Are the differentially expressed genes in my microarray experiment concentrated in pathways or gene ontology categories which are biologically meaningful?

- Use hypergeometric distribution or similar test to look for interesting patterns








# Pathway Analysis

- Free software such as GSEA (Gene Set Enrichment Analysis) and DAVID use public pathway or gene ontology repositories (e.g. Kegg, GO, Reactome, GEO datasets, etc.)
- Many commercial platforms (Ingenuity Pathway Analysis, GeneGo Metacore, Pathway Studio) use curated information which are more comprehensive than public pathway databases



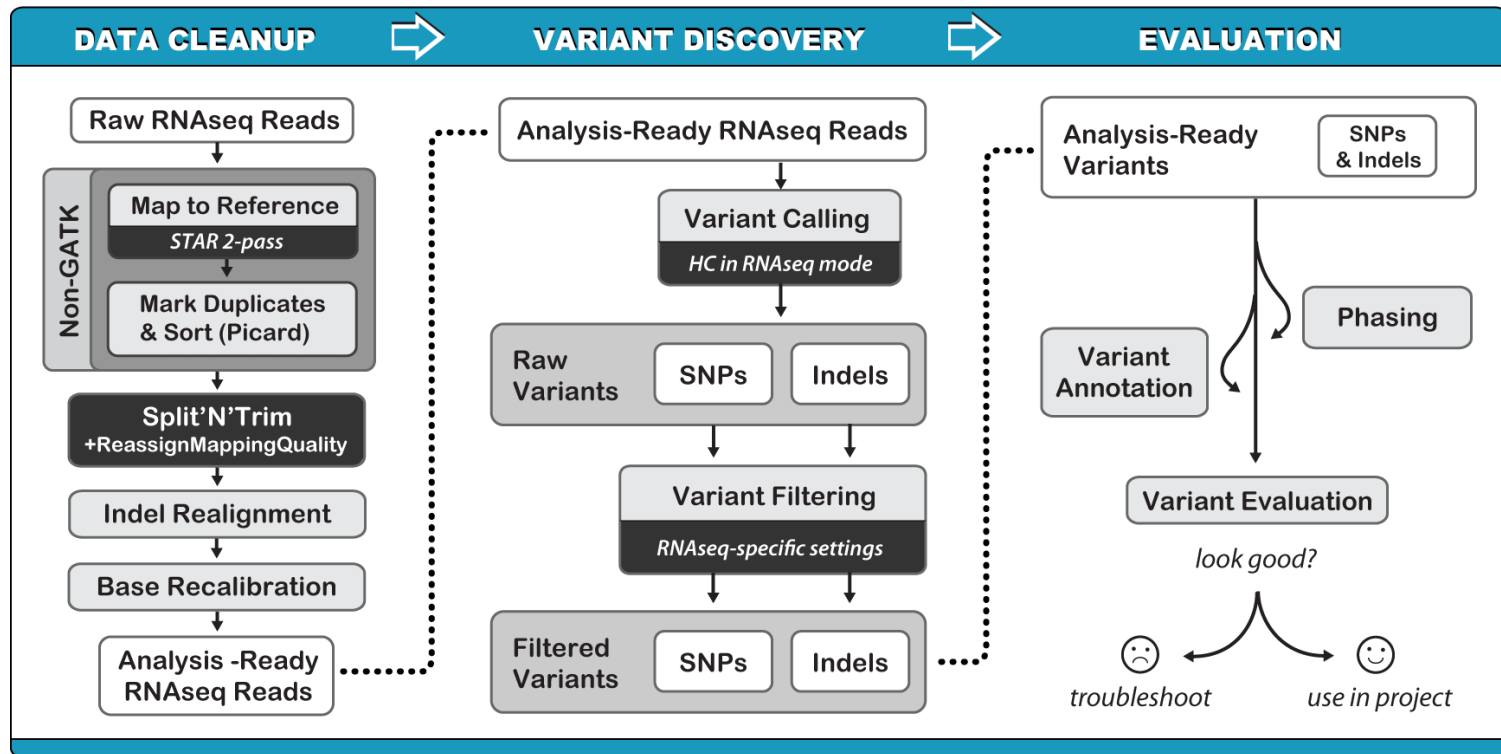
# Commercial Bioinformatics Tools available @ CCR

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Software	Vendor	Application
	Partek	Statistical analysis, Cluster Analysis, Pathways
<b>Nexus Expression</b>	BioDiscovery	Statistical analysis, Cluster Analysis
	iPathwayGuide	Pathway Analysis
	Ingenuity Systems	Pathway Analysis (Web-based)
<b>METACORE</b>	Thomson Reuters	Pathway Analysis (Web-based)
	Elsevier	Pathway Analysis (Web-based)
	Genomatix	Promoter Analysis



# Variant Calling



# Gene Fusion

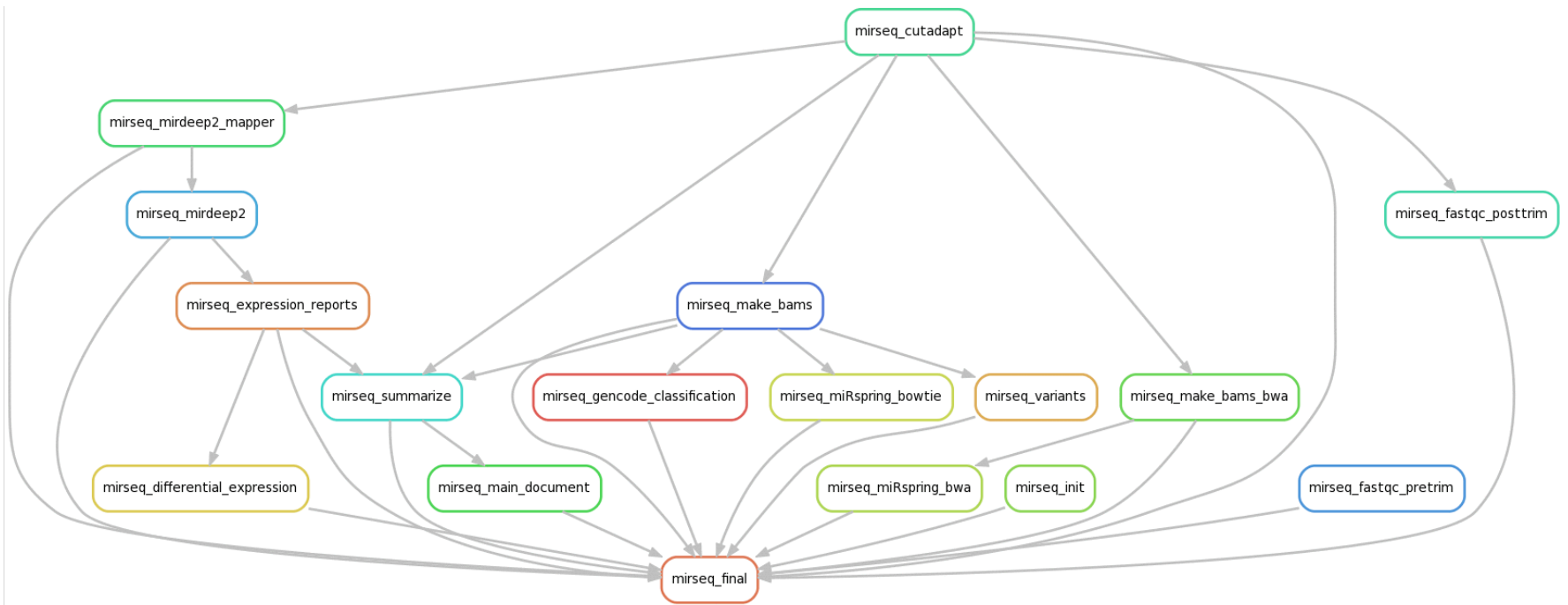
Table 3: Performance of fusion-detection tools on the mixed dataset.

From: [Comparative assessment of methods for the fusion transcripts detection from RNA-Seq data](#)

Tools	Total Fusions detected	True fusions detected	False fusions detected	Sensitivity (%)	Positive predictive value (%)	Time used (Minutes)	Memory (GB)
Bellerophon	43	34	9	68	79	1012	10.38
BreakFusion	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Chimerascan	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EricScript	39	39	0	78	100	677	4.67
FusionCatcher	31	31	0	62	100	932	1.76
FusionHunter	0	0	0	–	–	1202	5.86
FusionMap	60	36	24	72	60	120	12.50
JAFFA	23	22	1	44	95.6	3845	89.4
MapSplice	77	42	35	84	54	3825	5.48
nFuse	40	38	2	76	95	2306	12.57
SOAPfuse	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
TopHat-Fusion	28	28	0	56	100	2443	2.55

\*Indicates the software errors occurred in the handling of intermediate files. No final result was produced.

# miRNA-Seq



# bioinformatics.cancer.gov

**Bioinformatics @ CCR** Home **Ask for Help** Training & Education CCBR Publications

## Bioinformatics Support at CCR

The CCR Collaborative Bioinformatics Resource (CCBR) is an organizational umbrella which provides a mechanism for CCR researchers to obtain many different types of bioinformatics assistance to further their research...

[Read More](#)

### About CCBR

[View](#) [Edit](#) [Revisions](#)

- › Who we are
- › How CCBR Works
- › Pipeliner: for analysis of Exome-Seq, Genome-Seq and RNA-Seq data
- › NGS Experimental Design: Best Practices

## CCR Collaborative Bioinformatics Resource (CCBR)

The CCR Collaborative Bioinformatics Resource (CCBR) is a resource group which provides a mechanism for CCR researchers to obtain many different types of bioinformatics assistance to further their research goals. The group has expertise in a broad range of bioinformatics topics, and as such, its goal is to provide a simplified central access point for CCR researchers.

The CCBR group includes members of the CCR Office of Science and Technology Resources (OSTR), Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research (FNLRCR) and the Center for Biomedical Informatics and Information Technology (CBIIIT). The CCBR may also direct projects to other available CCR bioinformaticians as needs demand. Requests for any type of Bioinformatics support should be through the [CCBR Project Submission Form](#).

# CCBR support includes:

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Consulting on experimental design, help with analysis and interpretation of biological data produced by large-scale genomics technologies including Next-generation sequencing (RNA-Seq, Exome-Seq, ChIP-Seq, Whole genome Sequencing), and microarrays

Support for the development of methods for new technologies provided by the Office of Science and Technology Resources (OSTR)

Provide training classes to CCR scientists focusing on software used in the analysis of their own data

# CCBR Members

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Office of Science and Technology  
Resources (OSTR)

*Maggie Cam (Head)*

Center for Biomedical  
Informatics and Information  
Technology (CBIIT)

*Chunhua Yan*

*Ying Hu*

*Richard Finney*

Frederick National Laboratory of  
Cancer Research (Leidos)

*Parthav Jailwala (Manager)*

*Fathi Elloumi*

*Justin Lack*

*Bong-Hyun Kim*

*George Nelson*

*Alexei Lobanov*

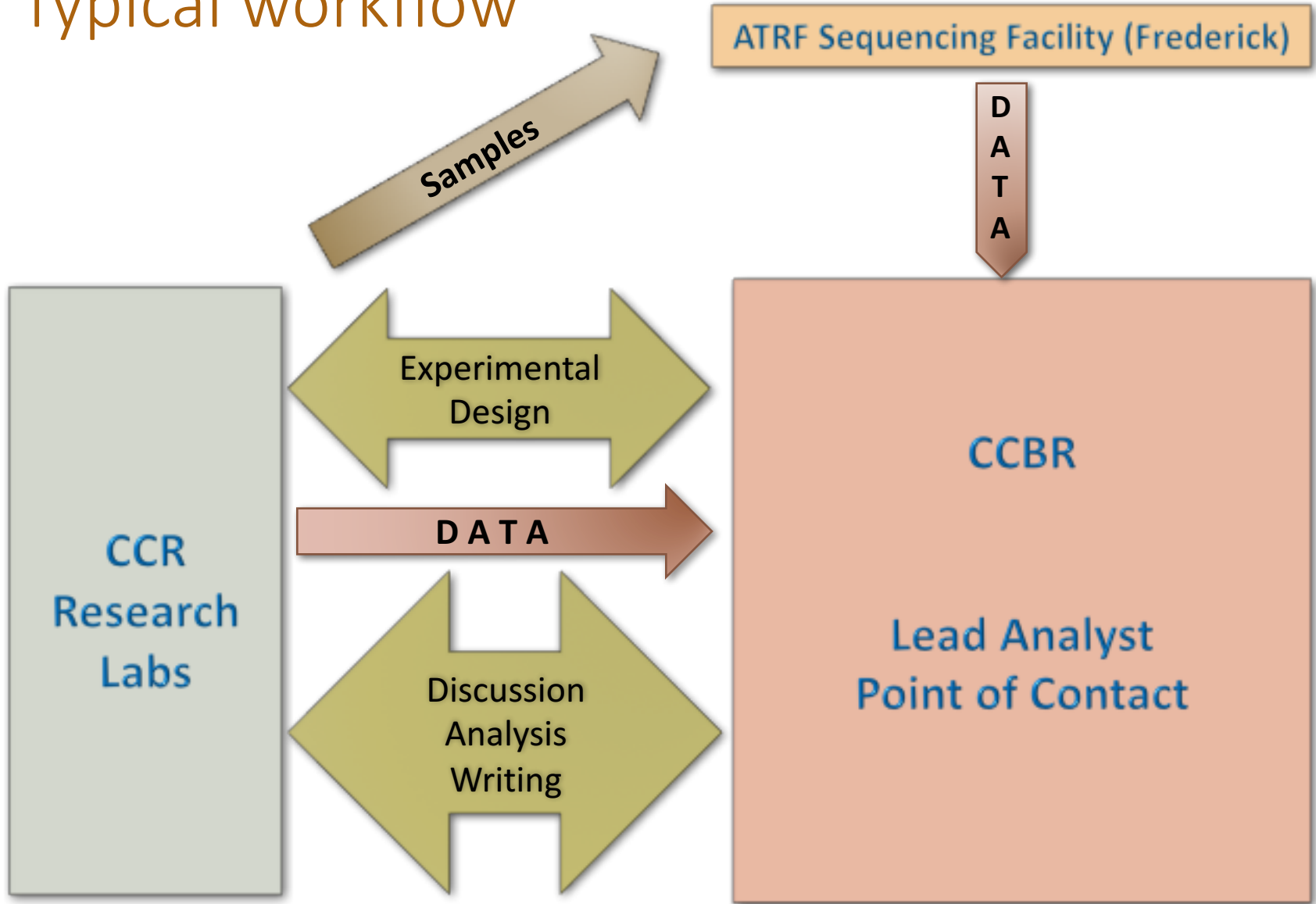
*Jack Chen*

*Ashley Walton*

*Vishal Koparde*

***Soon to be part of CDSL (CCR Cancer Data Science Lab)***

# Typical workflow



## Take Home Message:

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While you are planning your RNA-Seq experiment (not after), please come talk to us.

[CCBR@mail.nih.gov](mailto:CCBR@mail.nih.gov)