



INDIAN AND HINDU PERSPECTIVES ON GENETIC VARIATION RESEARCH

Fact Sheet

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Researchers from Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Houston are conducting a three-year study of Indian perspectives on health, illness, and disease. This study is being supported by the National Human Genome Research Institute, which is a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Why is this study being done?

This study is part of a larger NIH initiative to better understand cultural perspectives on genetics. Since genetic research often raises ethical and social questions, it is important to understand how different communities view such research. The present research on Indian perspectives on genetic variation is one of several such projects examining public attitudes about genetics.

This study is also part of a second research initiative to develop a resource for studying human genetic variation. This initiative, called the International HapMap Project, will create a resource for geneticists to use to study genes that may affect health, disease, and response to various drugs (for more information, go to <http://www.hapmap.org>). We hope to use the results of this research on Indian perspectives on genetic variation to develop culturally appropriate educational materials and recruitment strategies for the International HapMap Project.

If the results of this study suggest that it is ethically appropriate to recruit members of the community for studies of human genetic variation, we will then recruit volunteers for the International HapMap Project. Those volunteers will be asked to provide information about their ancestry and to donate a blood sample for future genetic analysis.

What is involved?

We plan to talk with members of the Indian community in the Houston area and to hold a series of focus groups to gain a better sense of Indian perspectives on health and medical research. We also plan to organize working groups to assist in the development of educational materials for the International HapMap Project. We will then present our findings at a number of community events and create a community advisory board for the HapMap Project. We expect to work with over 400 people during the course of the study.

How can you get involved?

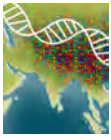
We are currently seeking volunteers to help us better understand Indian perspectives on genetics. If you would like to learn more about the study or if you are interested in getting involved, please contact Deepa Reddy (Phone: 281-283-3331; email: reddy@cl.uh.edu).



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Richard Sharp is an Assistant Professor of Medicine with the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy, Baylor College of Medicine. He received his B.A. in Sociology and Philosophy from Western Michigan University and his Ph.D. in Philosophy from Michigan State University. Before joining the Center in 2002, he worked as a Biomedical Ethicist at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, one of the National Institutes of Health, where he directed the Program in Environmental Health Policy and Ethics. His professional interests focus on ethical issues in genetic research.



Deepa S. Reddy, PhD (Investigator)
University of Houston-Clear Lake

Deepa Reddy received her B.A. from the University of Toronto, and her Ph.D. from Rice University. She has written on the Indian women's movement and feminist organizing, Hindu nationalist politics in India, and on the relationship of caste to race. Her book *Religious Identity and Political Destiny* is forthcoming with Rowman & Littlefield Press. Deepa Reddy teaches in the Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Studies Programs at the University of Houston-Clear Lake. Her Research Assistant is Corrie Manigold.



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Janis Faye Hutchinson is a biological/medical anthropologist in the Department of Anthropology, University of Houston. She received her doctorate from the University of Kansas, and her master's and bachelor degrees from the University of Alabama. Her research interests are centered on HIV/AIDS, racism and health, and health issues in minority communities. Her publications include *Cultural Portrayals of African Americans: Creating an Ethnic/Racial Identity* (1997). Her Research Assistant is Deanna Guidry.



John W. Belmont, MD, PhD (Investigator)
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John Belmont received his B.A. from the University of Texas in 1974 and his M.D. in 1980 and Ph.D. in 1981 from Baylor College of Medicine. He is currently a Professor in the Departments of Molecular and Human Genetics, Immunology, and Pediatrics, and Co-Director of the Cardiovascular Genetics Clinic. His research interests center on medical genetics.



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Jennifer Hamilton is a Senior Research Coordinator in the Center for Medical Ethics and Health Policy at Baylor College of Medicine. She received her B.A. in Anthropology and English Literature from McGill University and her Ph.D. in Anthropology from Rice University. She has taught extensively in both Anthropology and Gender Studies. Her research interests include law, culture, and society in the United States and Canada; gender studies and ethnicity; and law, technology, and the environment.



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