

# AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

## Genetics, Genomics, Genethics

### Week 1

#### Introduction to Rob DeSalle

**Rob:** My name is Rob DeSalle. I'm a curator at the American Museum of Natural History and co-direct the Museum's molecular laboratories where I run a research program. I'm also involved in educational projects, such as the development of on-line educational programs, and develop exhibitions with the exhibitions department.

The most recent exhibition that I've worked on is an exhibition called The Genomic Revolution. It's an exhibition that was born out of the importance of genetic and genomic research, in general, but also the Museum's drive toward understanding genomics and genetics and incorporating these fields into the Museum's research program.

In the exhibit, we wanted to give visitors a sense of the science and a sense of the ethical, social, and policy issues that they are going to face in the next couple of decades.

The most challenging thing about working on an exhibition like *The Genomic Revolution* is that you have to translate the hardcore science into something that's visual. This is something that allows a scientist like myself to have an idea about a scientific concept, like the gene or like DNA, and to work with artists, writers, sound people, and film makers to turn that concept into something that's visually appealing.

You also have to remember throughout all of it that the most important thing is not necessarily getting across every bit of information. The most important thing is really getting people interested in the subject matter and making them think really hard about it. You want them to go off and learn more about it on their own.