

## BOOK REVIEWS

# All you ever needed to explain genetics to non-geneticists

### Genes in the lives of the rich, the famous and the ordinary

Genetic Twists of Fate  
Edited by: Stanley Fields and Mark Johnston  
ISBN: 978-0-262-01470-0  
Published by: MIT Press (2010). Price: £17.95 \$26.00

Amanda Collins

*European Journal of Human Genetics* (2015) 23, 275; doi:10.1038/ejhg.2014.203

This is an excellent genetics book for non-geneticists. The authors use real-life stories from the past and of the famous to illustrate both basic and current concepts in

genetics in an extremely accessible way with helpful illustrations and analogies – for instance, the genetic sequence of human chromosome 12 would fill 52 000 pages of this book if the same font and size was used. We learn how small genetic changes might have led to more Azimov novels and abbreviated Rita Hayworth's career, as well as the intriguing ways in which classic genetic diseases were first identified. Population genetics, evolution and personal genetic testing all get a look-in and even the genetic view of race is discussed. This is a good book for older school students and others just interested in understanding better this fast-moving and increasingly relevant field. ■

A Collins is at the Wessex Clinical Genetics Services, Princess Anne Hospital, Southampton, UK  
E-mail: Amanda.Collins@uhs.nhs.uk

# A classic textbook which will earn its space on your bookshelf

### The clinical features and investigation of neuromuscular disorders

Electrodiagnosis in Diseases of Nerve and Muscle—Principles and Practice, 4th Edition  
Edited by: Jun Kimura  
ISBN: 978-0-19-973868  
Published by: Oxford University Press (2013) (Hardcover)  
Price: £100.00 \$155.00

Amanda Collins

*European Journal of Human Genetics* (2015) 23, 275; doi:10.1038/ejhg.2014.204

This tome is probably a classic for electrophysiologists and neurologists, but I also found it very useful as a jobbing geneticist. There is more basic science than I would ever read through in one go, but useful to refer back to, then, around half way through the

book, the various neurological disorders are introduced in groups – diseases of the spinal cord, myopathies, etc – with not just the electrophysiological findings but also the general features, clinical features, physiological characteristics and diagnostic criteria. There is of course a lot that is non-genetic (but useful for exclusion purposes) and copious references. There is also a whole section on the difficulties of investigating children with practical tips, as well as the changes expected with ageing. The book comes with a handy CD containing audible EMGs and tables of muscular innervations and normal EP values. This is a reference book and that is how I would use it – to direct investigations and educate me about the patients I am seeing in the clinic. ■

A Collins is at the Wessex Clinical Genetics Services, Princess Anne Hospital, Southampton, UK  
E-mail: Amanda.Collins@uhs.nhs.uk