IS ETHNIC IDENTITY GENETIC?

August 27 – DNAPrint Launches EURO-DNA(TM) 1.0

DNAPrint genomics has announced today that it has launched EURO-DNA(TM) 1.0, the world's first genetic test for determining intracontinental subpopulation (i.e. "ethnic") admixture.

EURO-DNA(TM) 1.0 provides customers their percentages of Northern European, Southeast European (Mediterranean), Middle Eastern and South Asian ancestry.

Price for new customers – $399 – find out who you really are!

Today The Scotsman and The Glasgow Herald reported the research of geneticist Daniel Bradley –

The Irish and Scots may be as closely related to the people of Spain and Portugal as the Celts of central

Europe.

Historians have long believed the British Isles were invaded by Iron Age Celts from central Europe in about 500 BC. But geneticists at Dublin's Trinity College now claim the Scots and Irish have as much, if not more, in common with the people of north-western Spain.

Genetic variability today is, of course, the result of historical processes. This is what such work builds upon. A famous example in palaeoanthropology is that of Mitochondrial Eve – tracking back from contemporary variability in mitochondrial DNA to propose a bottleneck in human evolution – a small community, even a couple, from which everyone today is descended.

The growing range of biometric data, with a new field of bioinformatics to manage and use the information will give us so much to work with – given the premise that genetic variability is genealogical.

But the crucial thing is to connect biology/genetics with society and culture. This is a no brainer. Human genetic material is passed on through people who live in historical societies that think about themselves. Ethnic identity is of course about who your biological ancestors were, but this is only the beginning. So many other factors come into play concerned with how people see themselves. Just think of this notion of Celtic identity. In no way can it be reduced to genetic material. And not least the notion of Celtic has changed massively through history.

I find this quite scary – fixing identity in biology.
Have we forgotten the horrors this has led to?

Gattaca [Link]