

Book Review

Genetic Genealogy In Practice

By Blaine T. Bettinger and Debbie Parker Wayne
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www.ngsgenealogy.org; 2016. 196 pp. Appendixes,
illustrations, exercises. Paperback. \$29.95
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Two pioneers of genetic genealogy education, Blaine T. Bettinger, Ph.D., J.D., and Debbie Parker Wayne, CG, teamed up to create a resource that provides in-depth information and skill-building exercises for those interested in the intersection of DNA and genealogy.

The book is the vision of Debbie Parker Wayne, who was a driving force behind genetic genealogy education at the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA; Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Utah, USA; and the Institute for Genealogical and Historical Research, Birmingham, Alabama, USA. Bettinger began lecturing on DNA for genealogy in 2009, around the same time as Wayne. Bettinger serves as the chairman of the Genetic Genealogy Standards Committee. Bettinger and Wayne's experiences in the genealogical classroom have given them insight into the "continuing need for education and hands-on exercises that help genealogists understand the benefits and limitations of DNA testing" (p. 1).

Topics include basic genetics, standards and ethics, Y-DNA, mitochondrial DNA, autosomal DNA, and X-DNA in addition to chapters on interpreting DNA testing in family studies and incorporating DNA evidence in a written conclusion. There is a section on recombination, a topic that Bettinger feels is critical for those participating in genetic genealogy. Information about the direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies and third-party tools is interwoven throughout the chapters.

The major strength of the publication is in the workbook format. The exercises urge the reader to think about the application of DNA to real life situations. They illuminate circumstances that researchers might not otherwise consider and address how to select the best candidates for testing. The answers to the exercises provide thoughtful, concise, and accurate explanations, often presenting multiple points of information in the answer to a single question.

Genetic genealogists who are interested in documenting their research will appreciate Chapter 8, "Incorporating DNA Evidence into the Written Conclusion." This chapter covers standards, privacy concerns, sharing DNA results, and citing DNA test results. There is a basic discussion of proof argument elements and process as well as suggested topics to be included in an analysis.

The appendices include a glossary and a reading and source list. Charts, tables, and illustrations present visual learning opportunities. Source citations are included.

While *Genetic Genealogy in Practice* is a useful guide for both the beginner and the experienced genetic genealogist, researchers with no previous genetic genealogy experience may wish to complement it with *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy* by Blaine T. Bettinger, which goes into greater detail about some concepts.

Bettinger and Wayne have met the challenge of providing a hands-on learning experience for genealogists that will remain useful until genetic genealogy testing and analysis endures a major change.

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