

Genetics of mood disorders : from pharmacogenetics to disease genetics

Citation for published version (APA):

Serretti, A. (2008). Genetics of mood disorders : from pharmacogenetics to disease genetics. Maastricht: Maastricht University.

Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2008

Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Please check the document version of this publication:

- A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
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**Genetics of mood disorders: from pharmacogenetics to
disease genetics**

Alessandro Serretti

Maastricht, 26 November 2008

1. The influence of each gene variant is subtle but very broad in controlling human behavior.
2. It is very difficult to predict specific liabilities to psychiatric disturbances based on genetic profile, but a combination of those and environmental risk factors will allow the clinicians to identify a range of possible behaviors.
3. The fact that HTTLPR variants influence drug response is probably due to an indirect and much more complex pathway, rather than a simple causative role.
4. In the next 5-10 years pharmacogenetics will be a clinical reality, however a number of factors may slow down this process, mainly clinicians attitude.
5. Cost benefit analyses are extremely difficult in psychiatry but they are of value for stakeholders, among other difficulties, pharmaceutical industries research bias is of much importance.
6. Ethical issues are to be considered for pharmacogenetic and genetic analyses but they should not be overly extended.
7. Clinical and research activity in the medical field are separated in US but mainly joined in Europe, overall this strategy leads to advantages and disadvantages to be analyzed case by case.
8. The traditional model of research is based on individualization of the young researcher while alternative models propose a team process optimization similar to private company style, the latter may be more productive.
9. The global financial crisis poses reflection linked to the human nature: freedom and private interest leads to a much improved production and quality of life but it may also lead to excesses unbalances, such as the presence of a wealth in derivatives 10 times greater than real world wealth. In the past those kind of excesses lead to the fall of empires.
10. Two great men, different and similar, the life of Alan Greenspan (from 1987 to 2006 the Chairman of the Federal Reserve) and Grigori Rasputin (a Russian mystic lived during the times of Russian Tsar Nicholas II), though very different, they share a strong commitment in their views resulting in a heavy influence on world history.