

# Variant View

*Genomics, Big Data, and Patient Privacy Implications*

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University of British Columbia

**THINK Conference**

6 Nov 2015, Santa Cruz CA

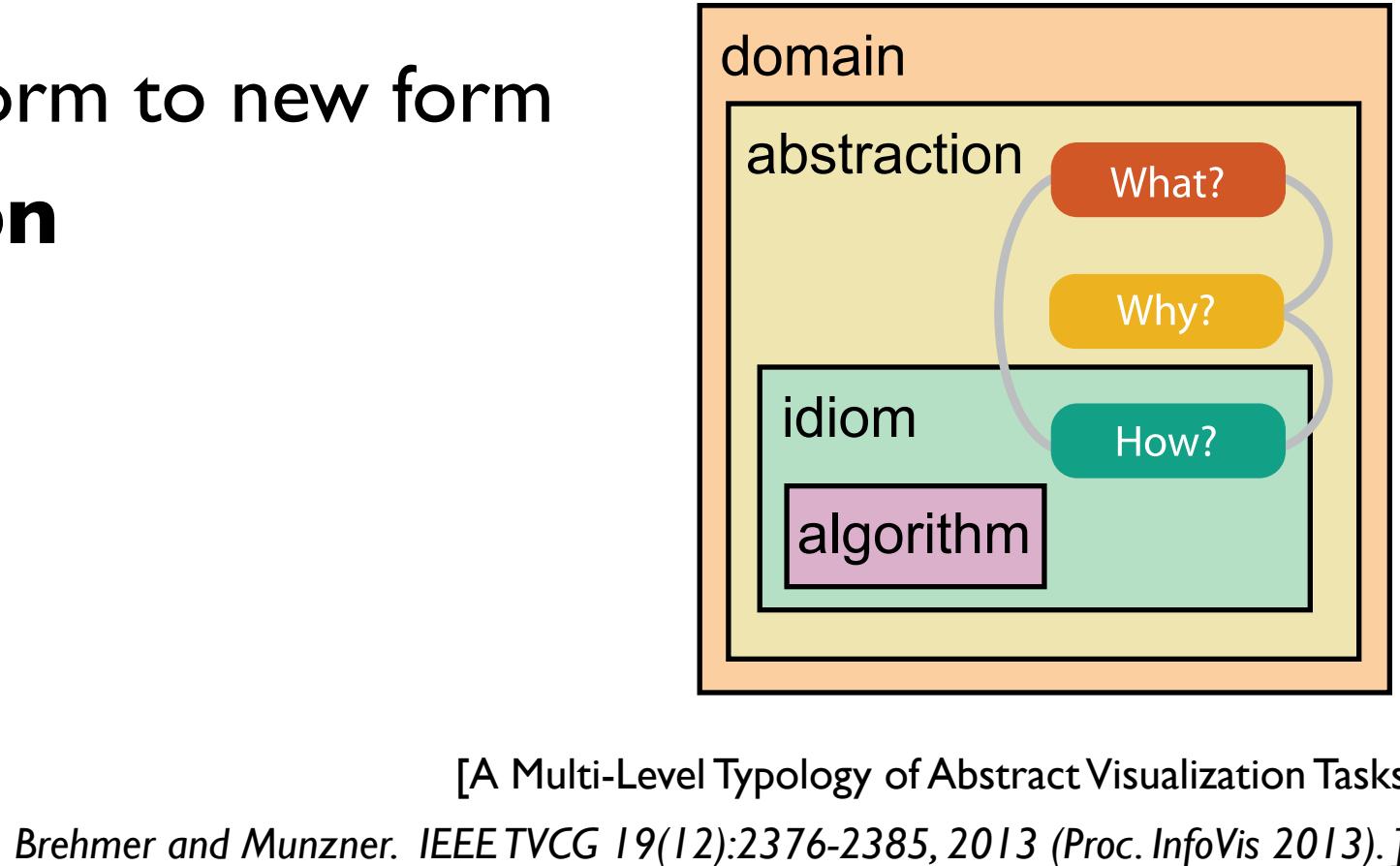
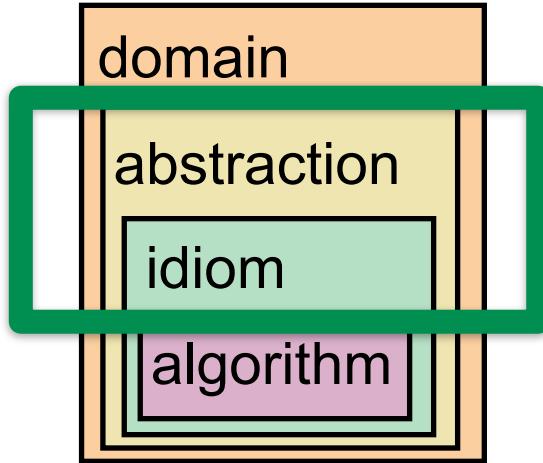
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/talks.html#think15>

@tamaramunzner

# Visualization analysis framework: Four levels, three questions

- **domain situation**
  - who are the target users?
- **abstraction**
  - translate from specifics of domain to vocabulary of vis
    - **what** is shown? **data abstraction**
      - often don't just draw what you're given: transform to new form
      - **why** is the user looking at it? **task abstraction**
  - **idiom**
    - **how** is it shown?
      - **visual encoding idiom**: how to draw
      - **interaction idiom**: how to manipulate
  - **algorithm**
    - efficient computation

[A Nested Model of Visualization Design and Validation.  
Munzner. *IEEE TVCG* 15(6):921-928, 2009 (Proc. InfoVis 2009).]



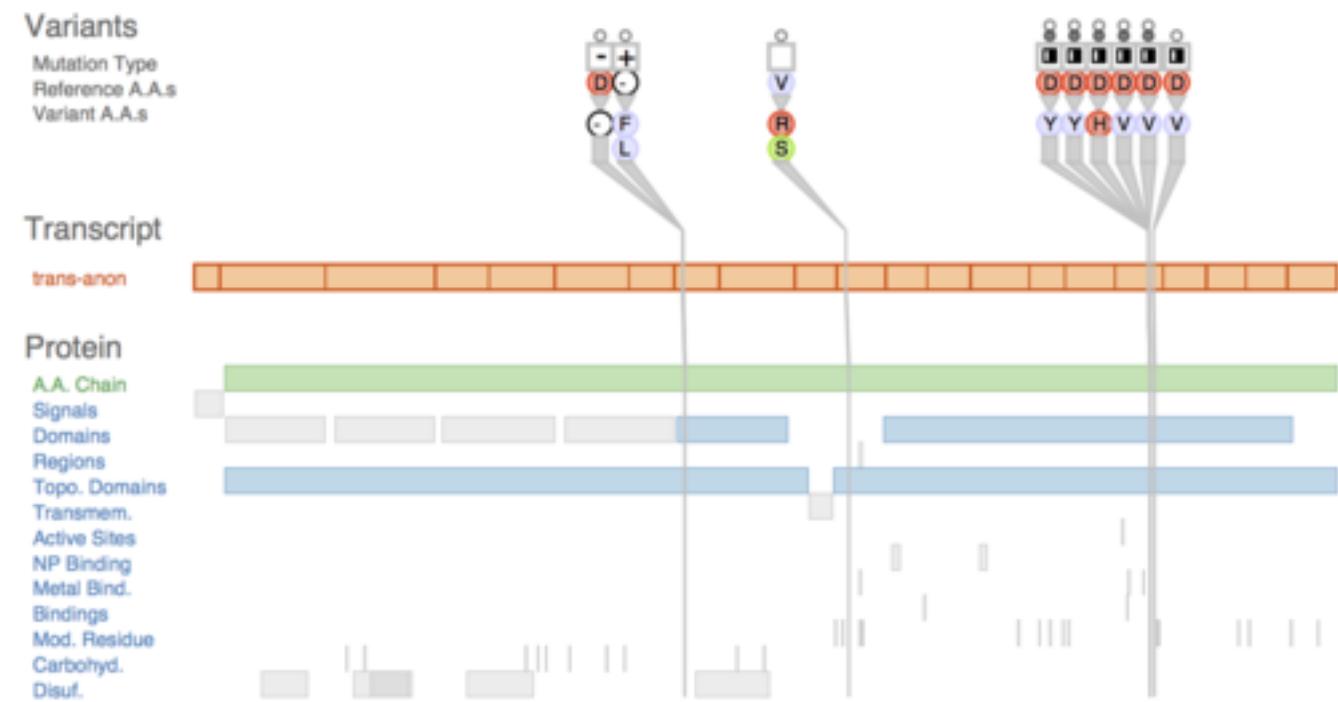
# Variant View

*Visualizing Sequence Variants in their Gene Context*

**joint work with:**

Joel Ferstay, Cydney Nielsen

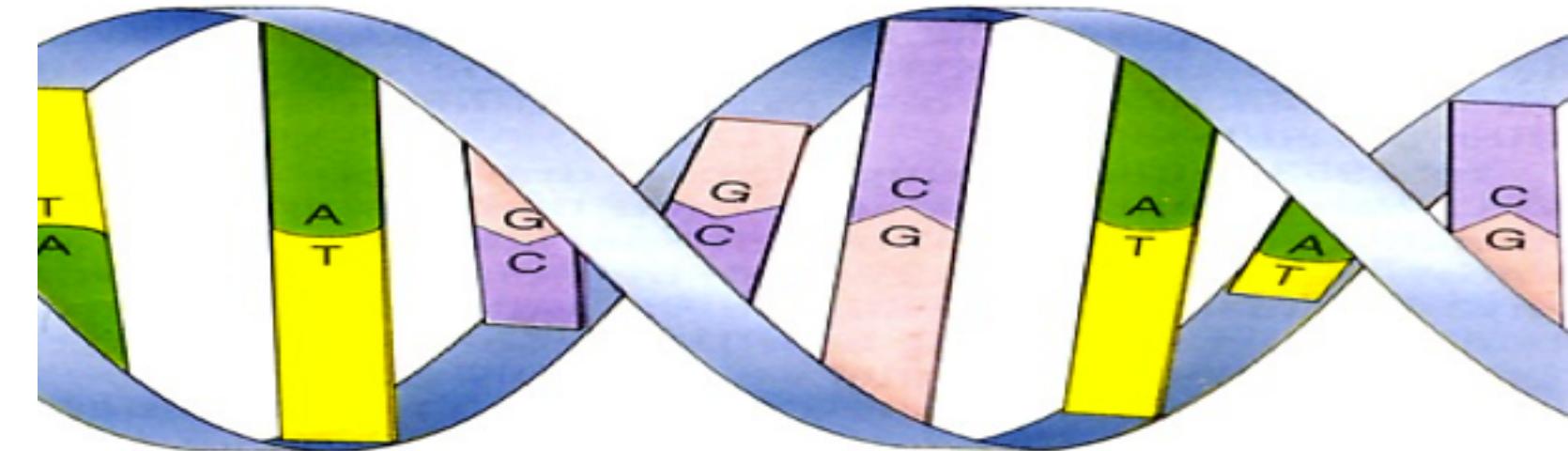
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/labs/imager/tr/2012/VariantView/>



Variant View: Visualizing Sequence Variants in their Gene Context.  
Ferstay, Nielsen, Munzner. IEEE TVCG 19(12): 2546-2555, 2013 (Proc. InfoVis 2013).

# Sequence Variant Definition

- Sequence variants
  - Difference between reference and given person's genome



Reference Genome DNA: ATA TGA TCA ACA CTT

Sample 1 Genome DNA: ATA T<sub>G</sub><sub>G</sub> TCA A<sub>T</sub> A CTT

Harmful?

Sample 2 Genome DNA: ATA TGA T<sub>G</sub> A ACA C<sub>C</sub> T

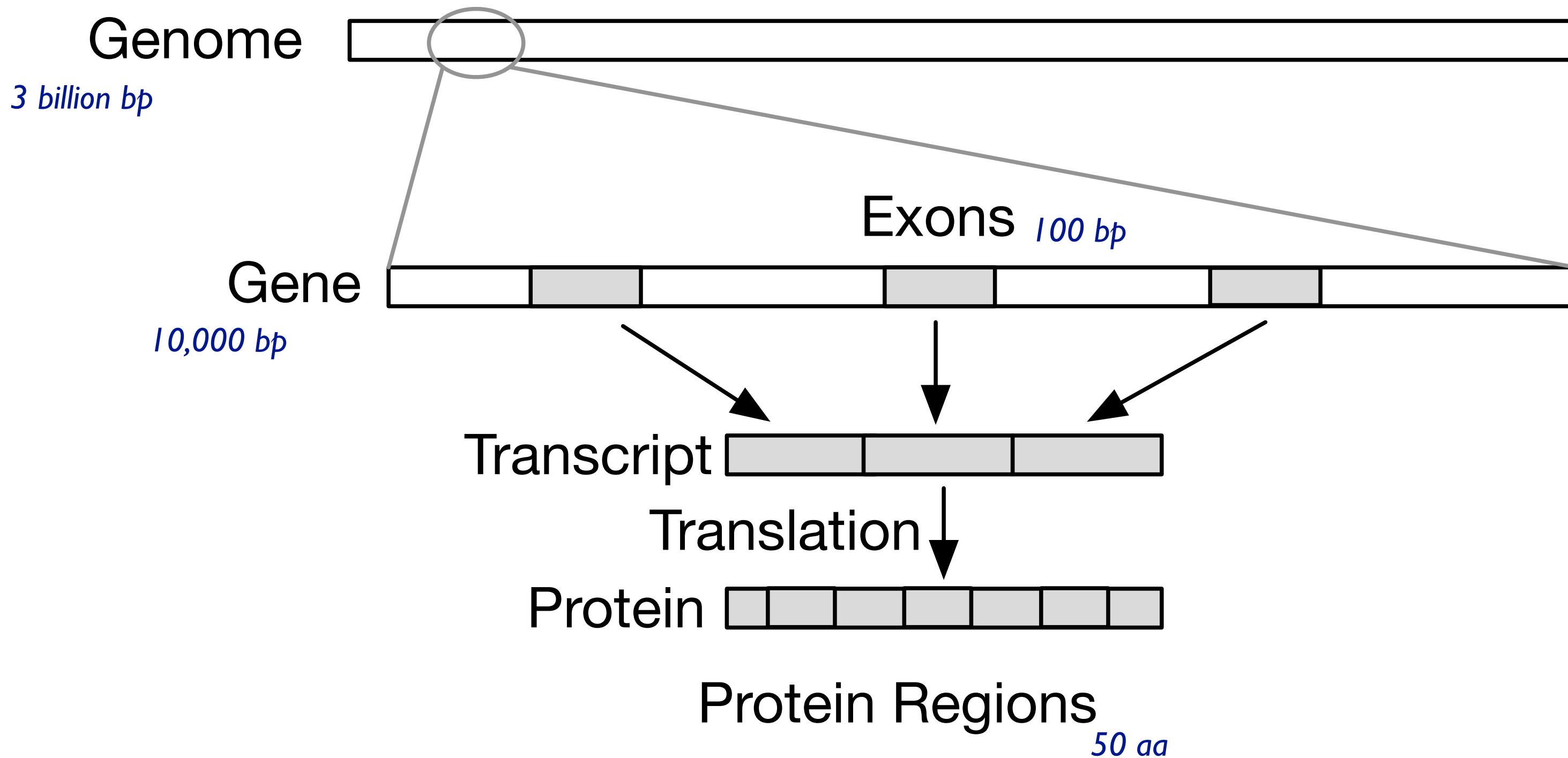
Harmless?

# Cancer Research

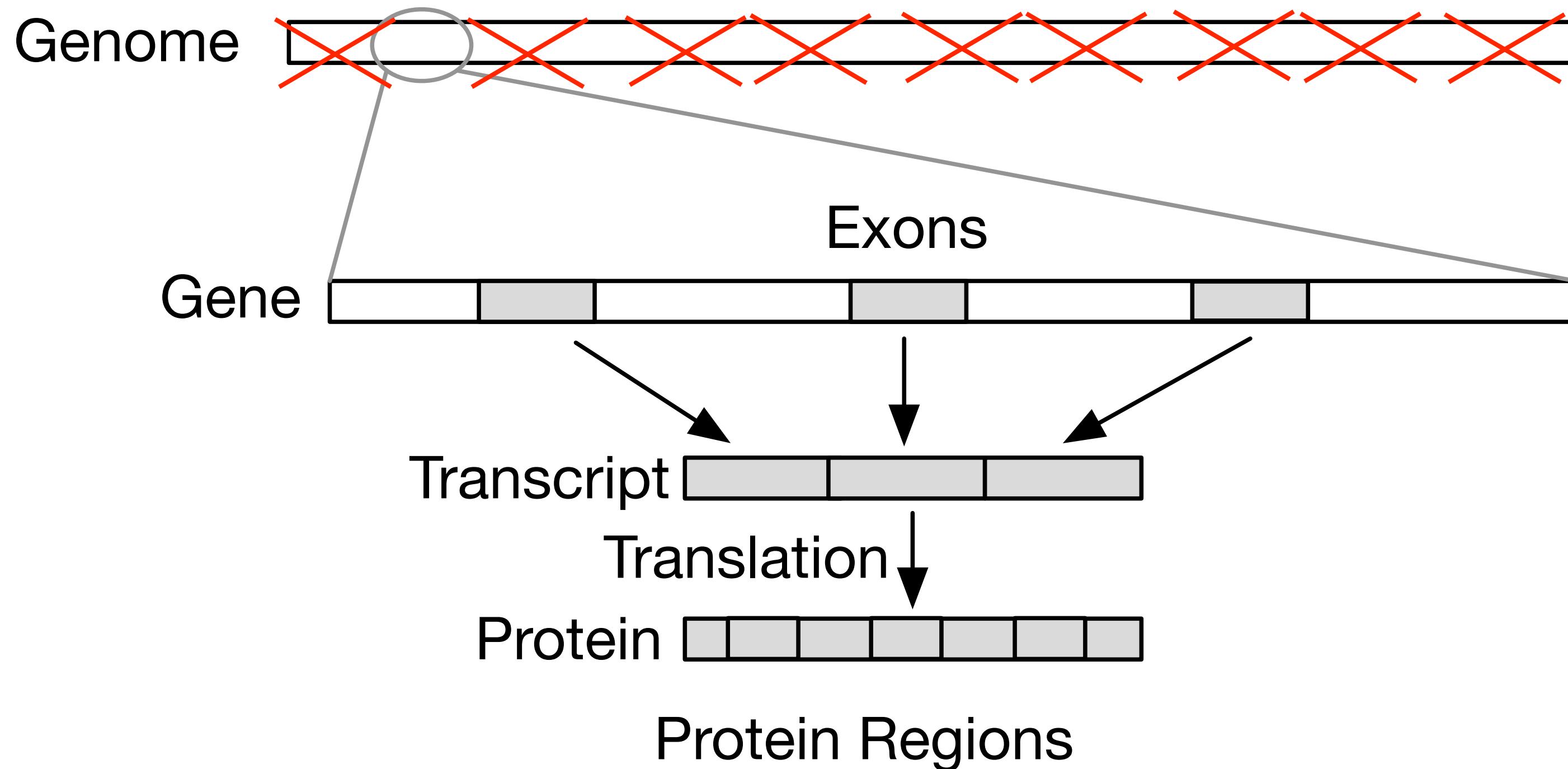
- collaboration with analysts at BC Genome Sciences Center
  - studying genetic basis of leukemia
- driving task
  - discover new candidate genes with harmful variants
- two big questions
  - what to show
    - data abstraction
    - challenge: enormous range of scales in the data
  - how to show it
    - visual encoding idiom

# Abstractions

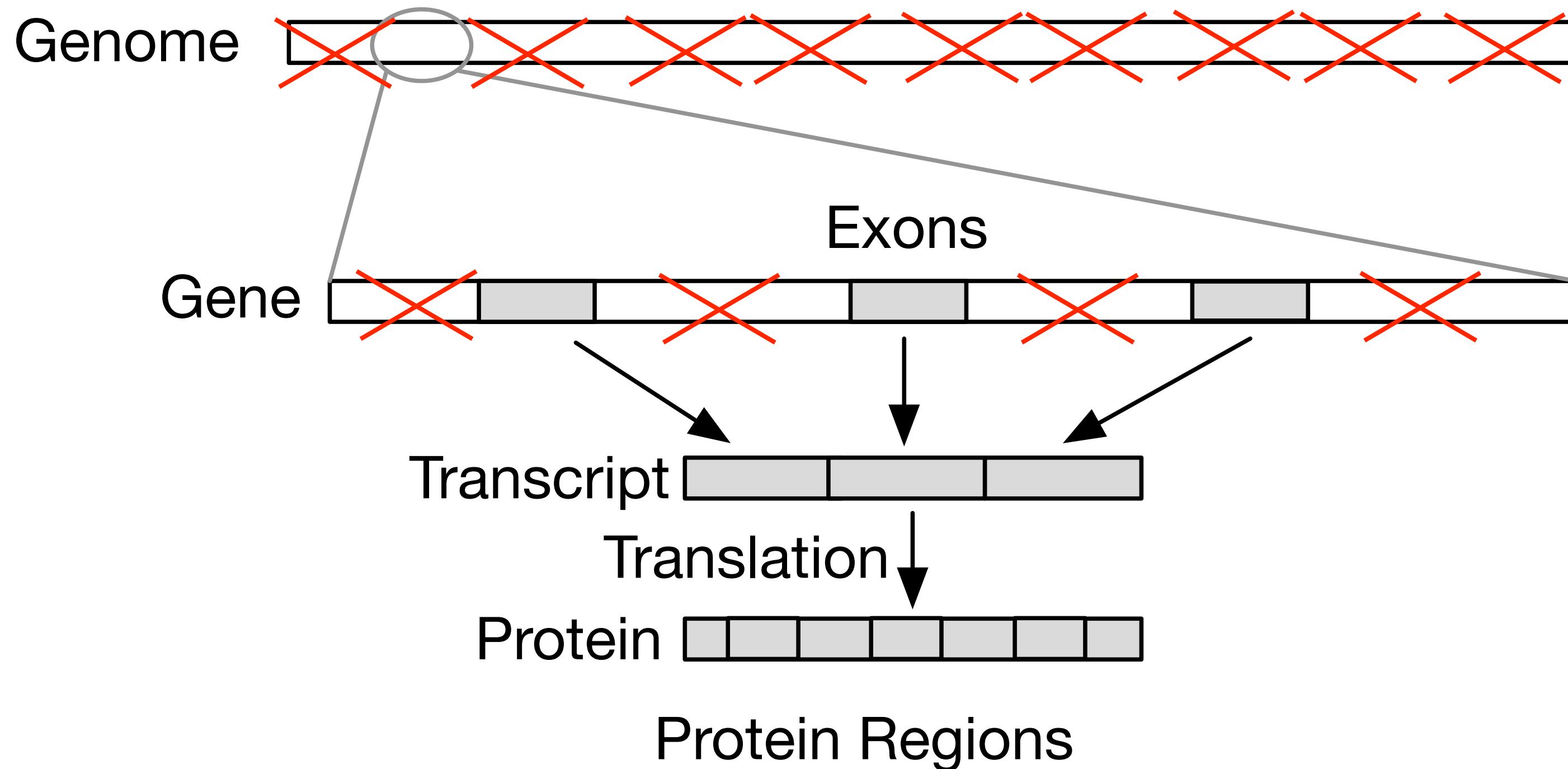
# Data: Filtering to relevant biological levels and scales



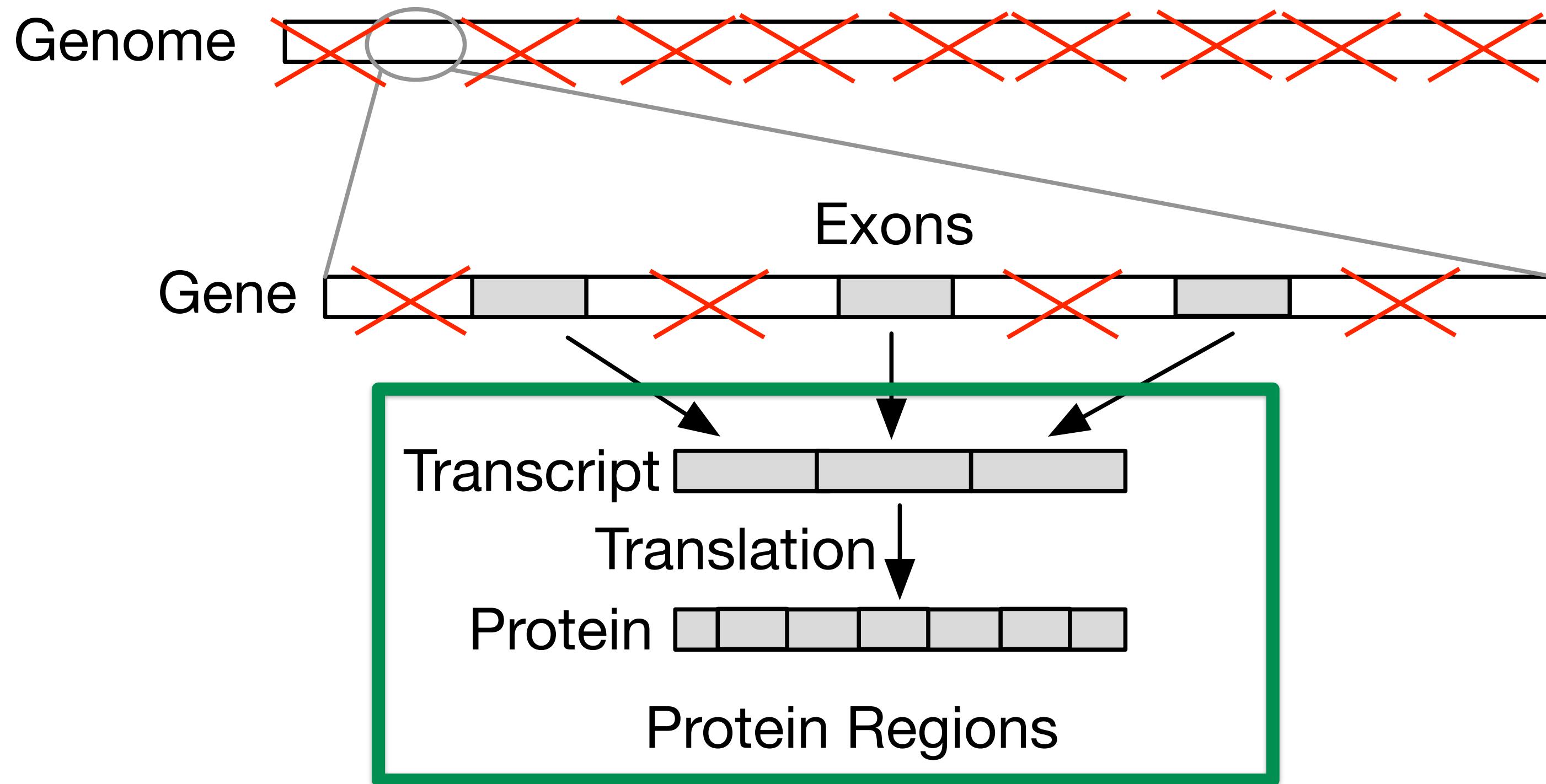
# Filter out whole genome; keep genes



# Filter out non-exon regions

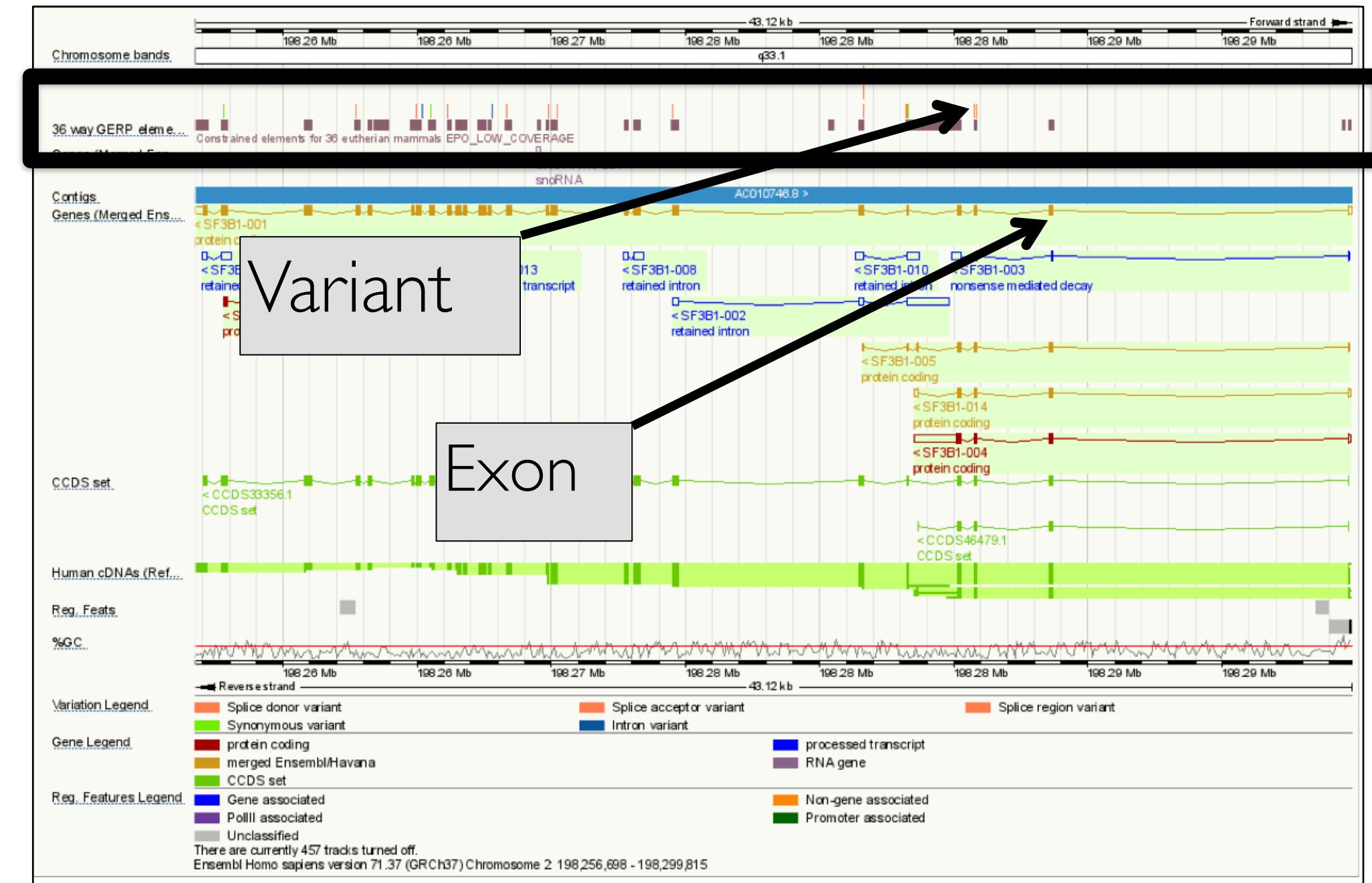


# Data abstraction: highly filtered scope



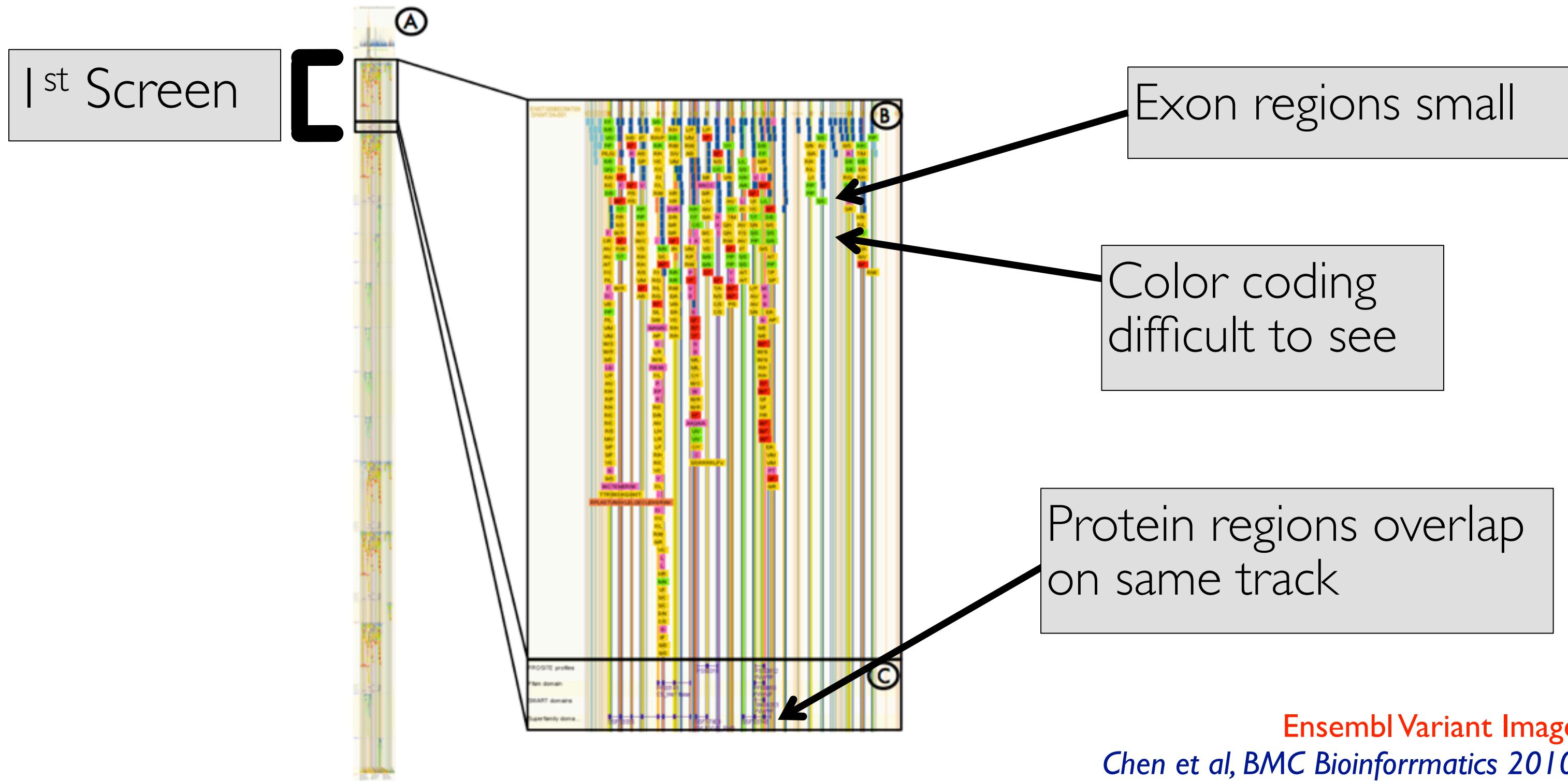
# Dominant paradigm: genome browsers

- strengths: flexible and powerful
  - horizontal tracks: user data
  - shared coordinate system: genome coordinates (bp)
- problems
  - tiny features of interest spread out across large extent
    - must zoom far in to inspect known feature, then zoom out and pan to locate next
    - high cognitive load for interaction
    - must already know where to look



representative example: Ensembl  
Chen et al, BMC Bioinformatics 2010.

# Features of interest small even in variant-specific view



# Idioms

# Variant View

Gene Search:

**A**

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon)

Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s

Transcript

trans-anon

Protein

A.A. Chain  
Domains  
Regions  
Active Sites  
Bindings  
Mod. Residue

**B**

Variant Data

Patient ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	dbSNP129	dbSNP135	dbSNP137	COSMIC	A.A. Chng.	Gene	Ref ID
pid-anon	11288816	G	T	.	.	.	"13028,	G60V	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288816	G	T	.	.	.	"13012,	D61Y	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288819	G	T	.	rs121918	.	13014	A72S	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288819	C	T	.	.	.	"13035,	A72V	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288821	G	C	.	.	.	"13016,	E76Q	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288821	A	G	.	rs121918	.	"13017,	E76G	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11288821	G	T	.	.	.	.	E76D	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11292688	T	A	.	rs121918	.	"13020,	S502T	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11292688	T	G	.	.	.	"13020,	S502A	gene-anon	trans-anon
pid-anon	11292688	C	T	.	.	.	13023	S502L	gene-anon	trans-anon

**C**

Sort By Gene:

Alpha Cluster Score Variant Count

- DNMT3A (NM\_022552)
- IDH2 (NM\_002168)
- FLT3 (NM\_004119)
- ANKRD36 (NM\_001164315)
- ARID1B (NM\_017519)
- STAG2 (NM\_001042749)
- TNRC18 (NM\_001080495)
- WT1 (NM\_000378)
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- SYNE1 (NM\_033071)
- ALMS1 (NM\_015120)
- C10orf68 (NM\_024688)
- CCDC88C (NM\_001080414)
- DNAH11 (NM\_003777)
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- DNAH9 (NM\_001372)

# Variant View

Previous: Table, one row per variant

Information-dense single gene view

Gene Search:  Submit

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trans-anon

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pid-anon	11292688	C	T	.	.	.	13023	S502L	gene-anon	trans-anon

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**C**

No need for pan and zoom

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# Variant View

Sorting metrics guide gene navigation

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- Alpha
- Cluster Score
- Variant Count

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Variant A.A.s

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trans-anon

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pid-anon	11292688	C	T	.	.	.	13023	S502L	gene-anon	trans-anon

# Variant View

Sorting metrics guide gene navigation

The screenshot illustrates the Variant View interface, which integrates gene navigation and variant filtering.

**Left Panel (Gene Navigation):** This panel shows the gene structure for "gene-anon (trans-anon)". It includes:

- Alternative Transcripts:** Shows two transcripts: "gene-anon" and "trans-anon".
- Variants:** Displays mutation types (G, D, A, E, S, V, Q, T, L) and their positions along the transcript.
- Transcript:** The "trans-anon" transcript is shown as a series of orange boxes.
- Protein:** The protein structure is shown as a green bar above a blue bar, with various domains and regions highlighted.
- Variant Data:** A table below lists variants from rs135 to rs1918, including dbSNP135, dbSNP137, COSMIC, A.A. Chng., Gene, and RefSeq ID.

**Right Panel (Variant Filtering):** This panel lists genes sorted by Variant Score, with a secondary sort by Variant Count. The genes are:

Sort By Gene	Alpha	Cluster Score	Variant Count
DNMT3A (NM_022552)			
IDH2 (NM_002168)			
FLT3 (NM_004119)			
ANKRD36 (NM_001164315)			
ARID1B (NM_017519)			
STAG2 (NM_001042749)			
TNRC18 (NM_001080495)			
WT1 (NM_000378)			
ABCA13 (NM_152701)			
CEBPA (NM_004364)			
TET2 (NM_001127208)			
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CCDC88C (NM_001080414)			
DNAH11 (NM_003777)			
DNAH3 (NM_017539)			
DNAH9 (NM_001372)			

**Annotations:**

- A:** An arrow points from the "Variant Score" header in the sorting table to the "Variant Score" column in the gene list.
- B:** An arrow points from the "Variant Data" table to the "Variant Score" column in the gene list.
- C:** An arrow points from the "Variant Score" column in the gene list to the "Variant Score" header in the sorting table.

**Bottom Panel (Variant Data):** This panel displays a table of variants from rs135 to rs1918, including dbSNP135, dbSNP137, COSMIC, A.A. Chng., Gene, and RefSeq ID.

rsID	dbSNP135	dbSNP137	COSMIC	A.A. Chng.	Gene	RefSeq ID
rs135	.	.	"13028,	G60V	gene-anon	trans-anon
rs1918	.	.	"13012,	D61Y	gene-anon	trans-anon
rs121918	.	.	13014	A72S	gene-anon	trans-anon
rs121918	.	.	"13035,	A72V	gene-anon	trans-anon
rs121918	.	.	"13016,	E76Q	gene-anon	trans-anon
rs121918	.	.	"13017,	E76G	gene-anon	trans-anon
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# Variant View

Gene Search:

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon)

Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s

Transcript

trans-anon

Protein

A.A. Chain  
Domains  
Regions  
Active Sites  
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pid-anon	11288819	G	T	.	rs121918	.	"13014	A72S		
pid-anon	11288819	C	T	.	.	.	"13035,	A72T		
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pid-anon	11288821	G	T	.	.	.	E76D		gene-anon	trans-anon
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(A)

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FAT1 (NM_005245)
MDN1 (NM_014611)
PTPN11 (NM_002834)

(C)

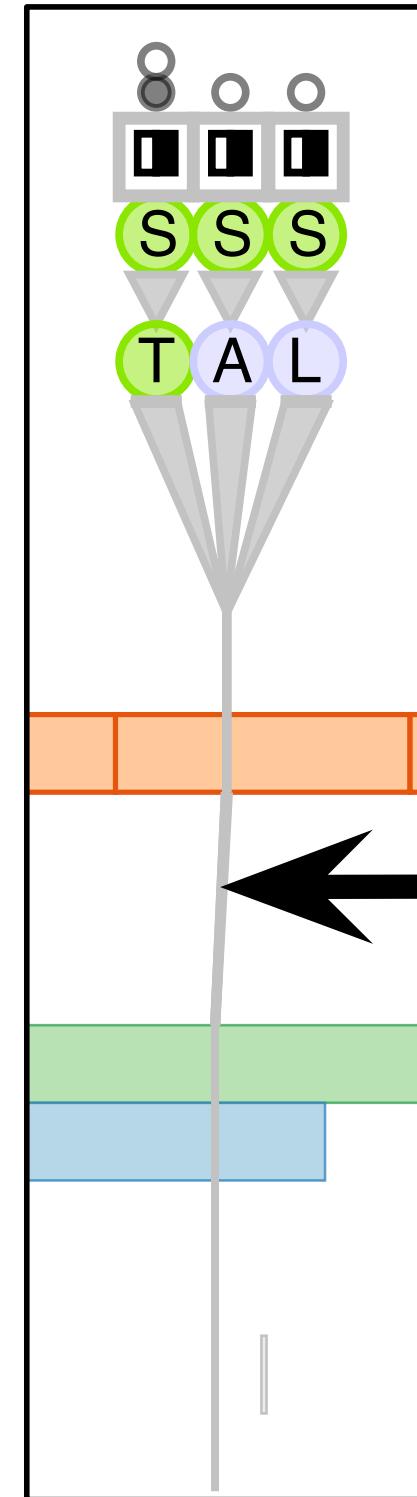
(B)

Peripheral supporting data

19

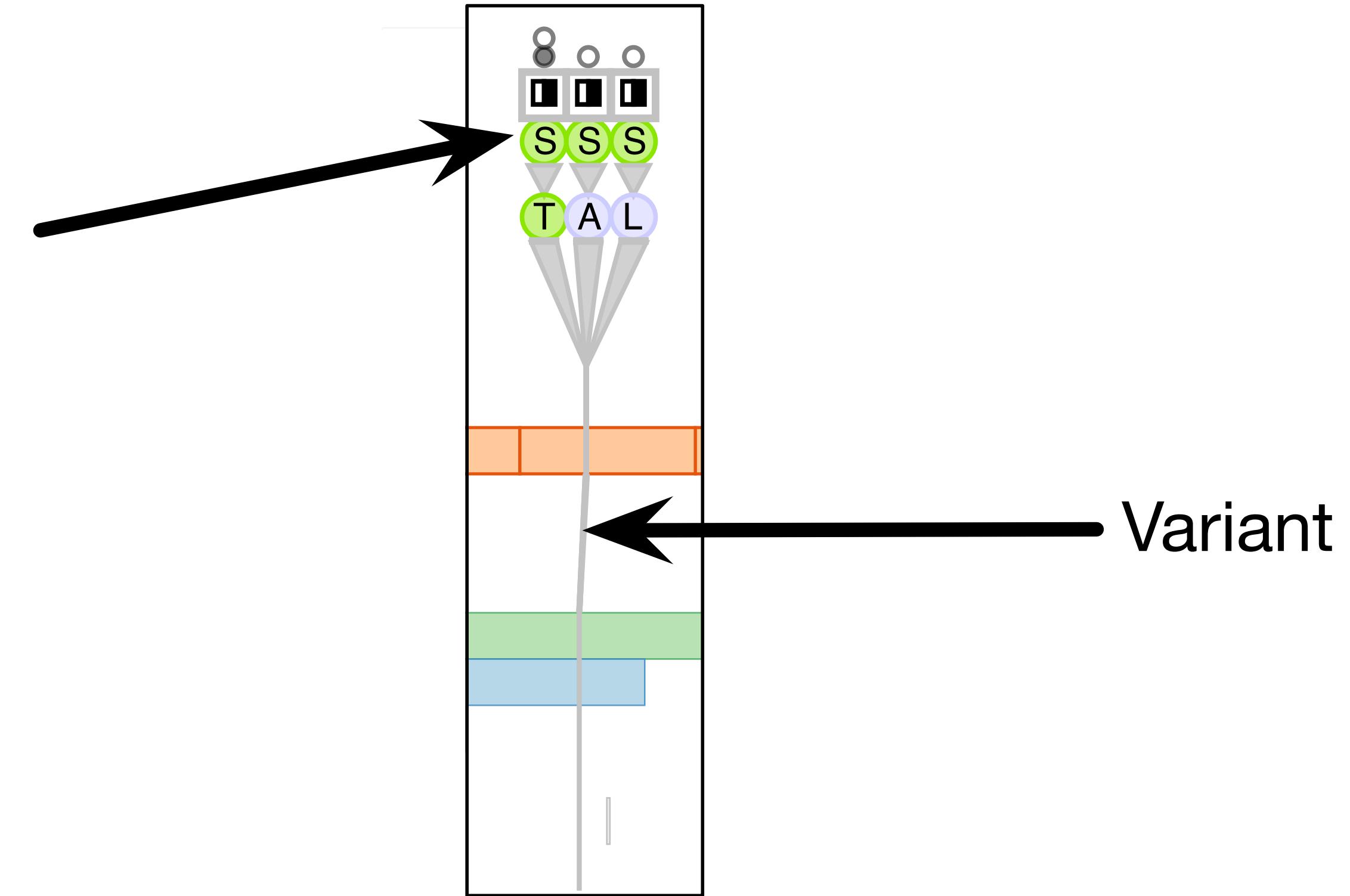
# Design information-dense visual encoding

- show all attributes necessary for variant analysis
  - match salience with importance for analysis task
- variant not just a thin line!
- emphasize with high salience
  - collocated variants fan out at top
  - grey variant vertical stroke intersects horizontal colored protein regions

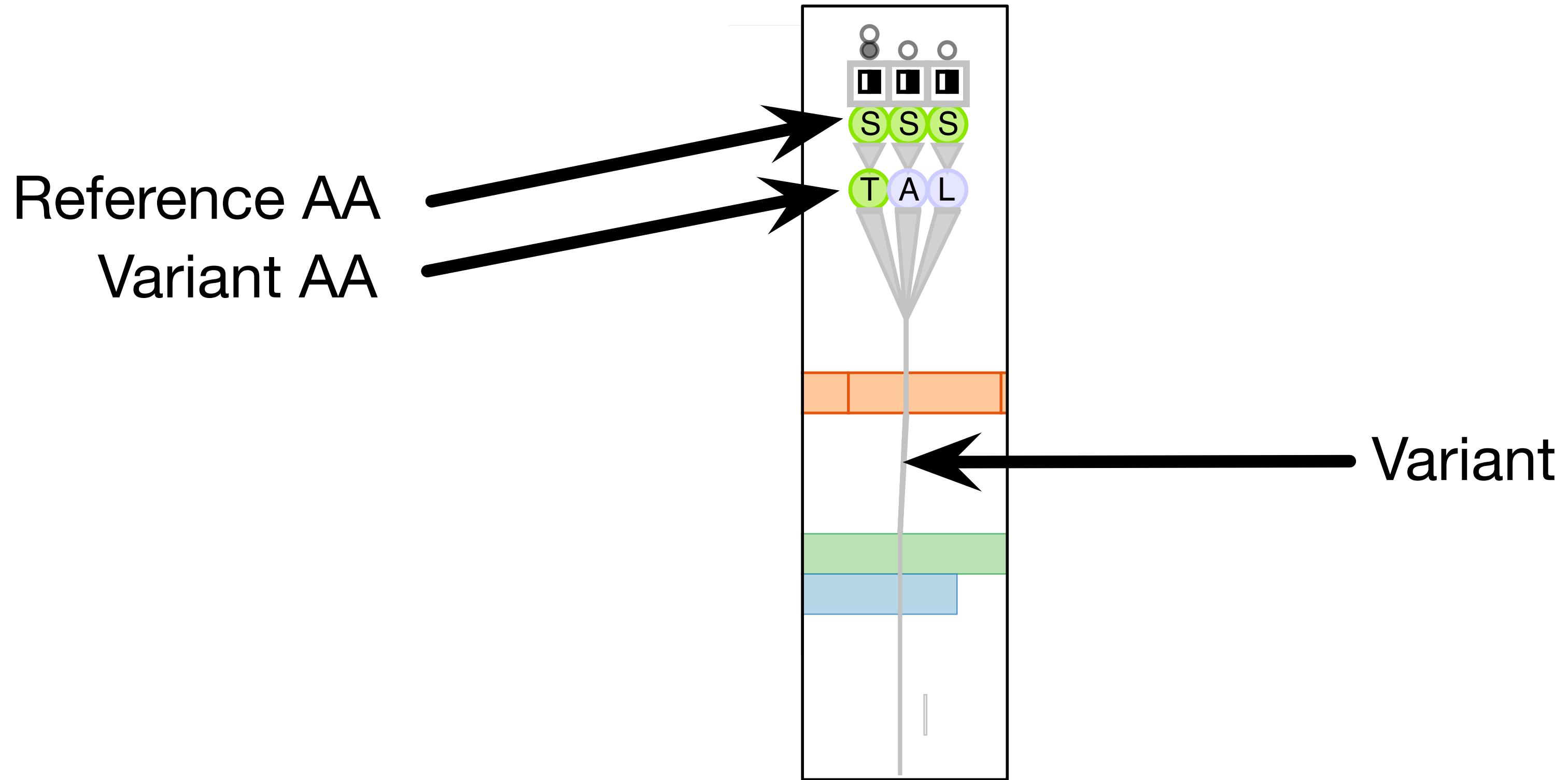


# Design information-dense visual encoding

Reference AA



# Design information-dense visual encoding



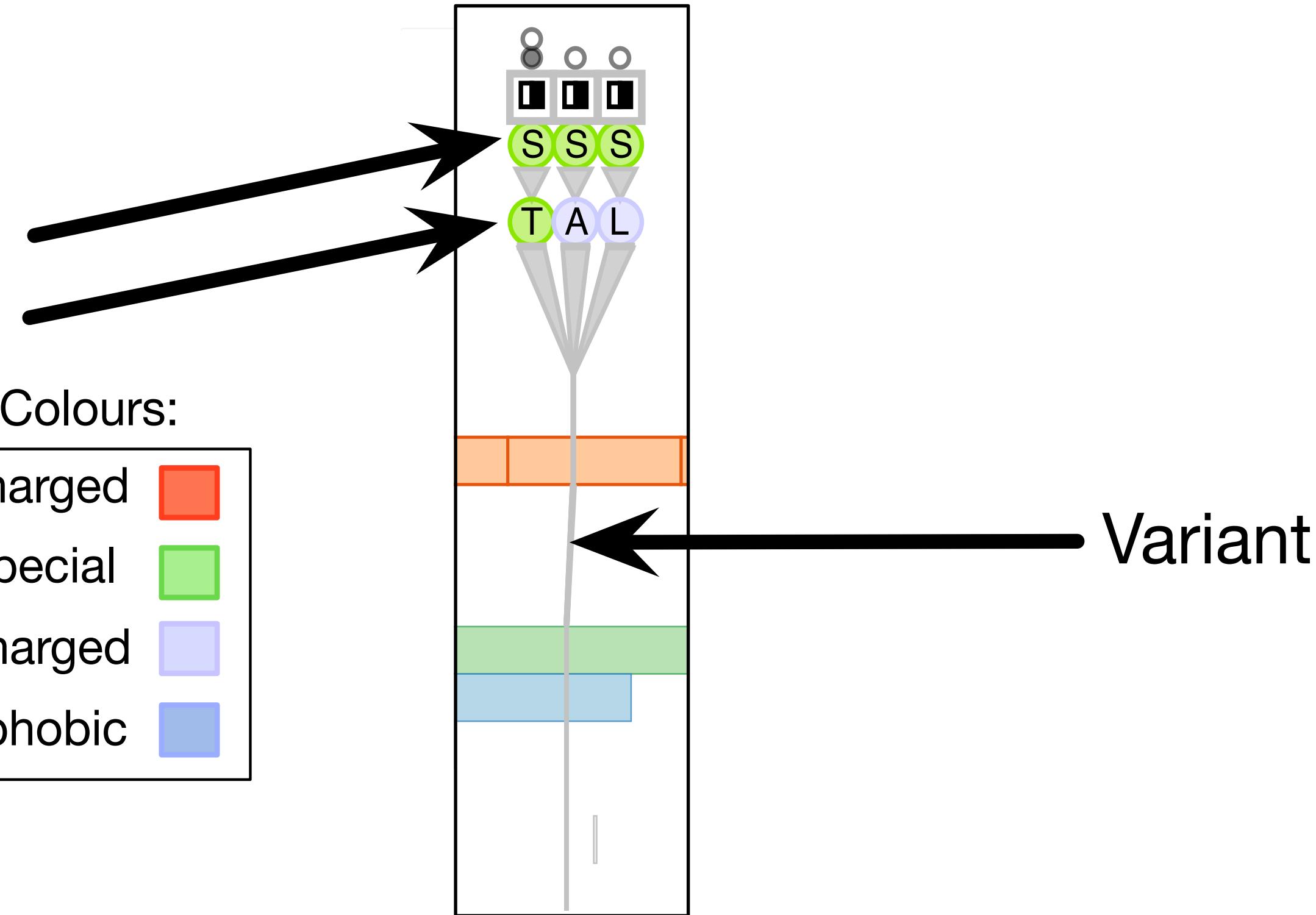
# Design information-dense visual encoding

Reference AA

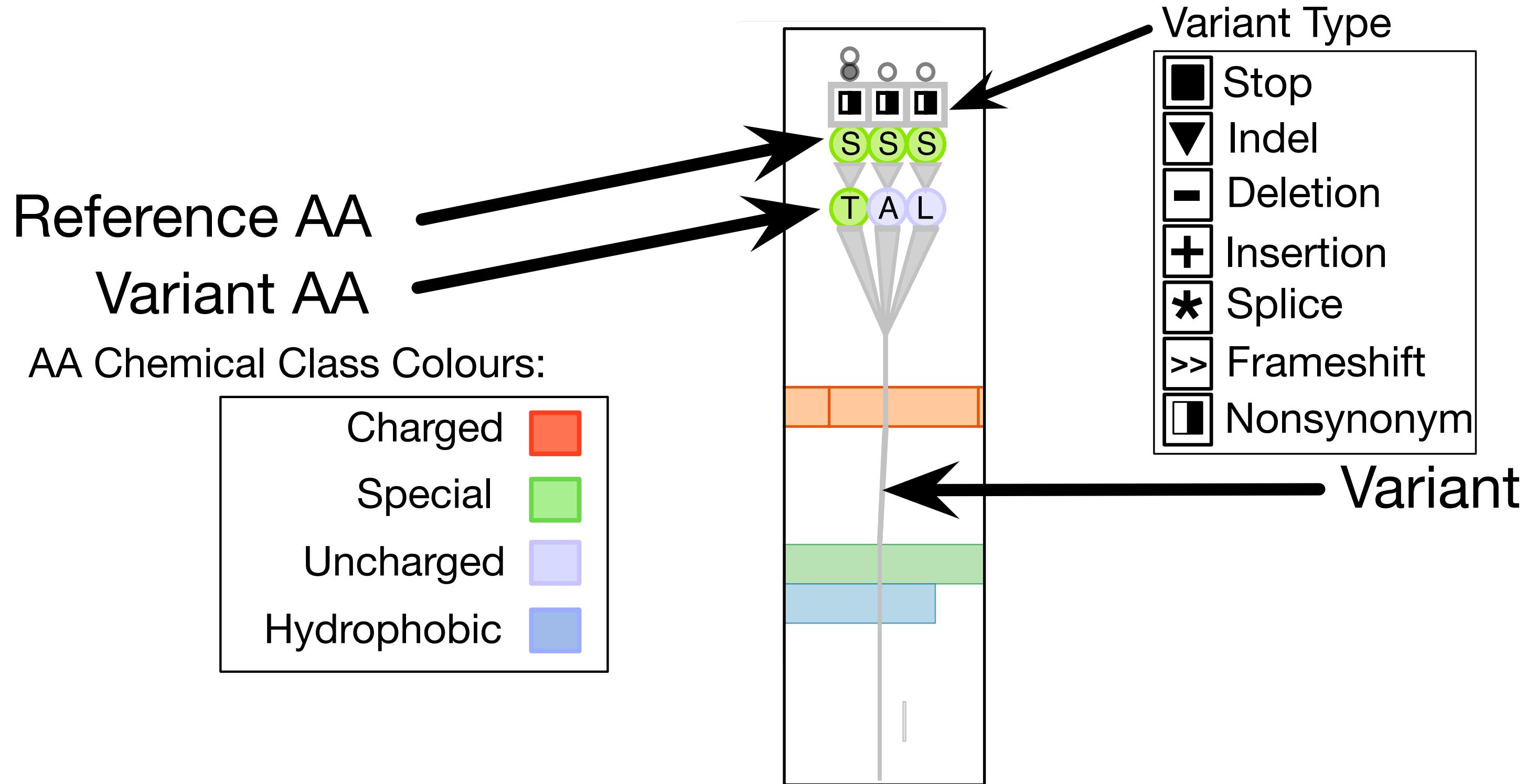
Variant AA

AA Chemical Class Colours:

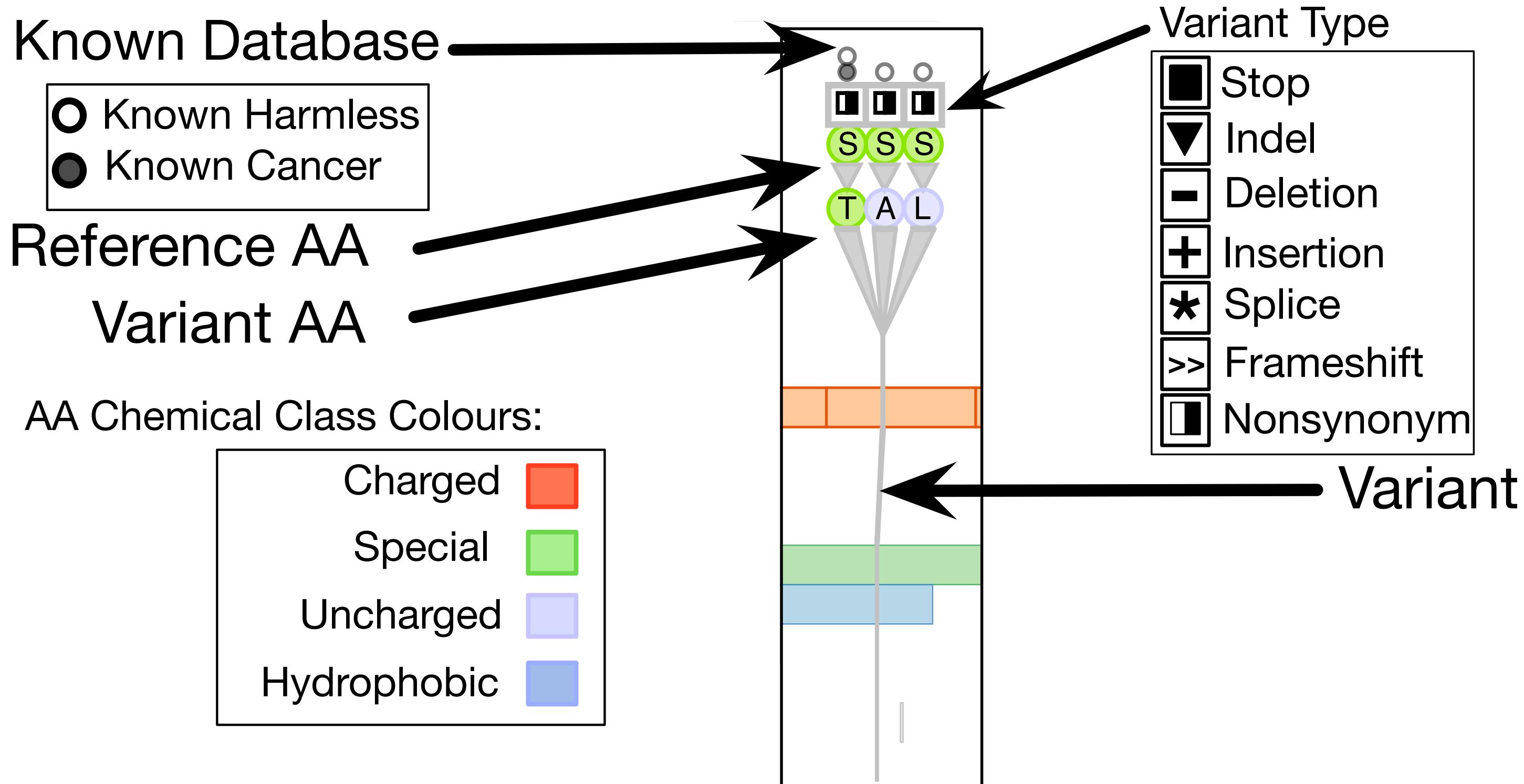
Charged	
Special	
Uncharged	
Hydrophobic	



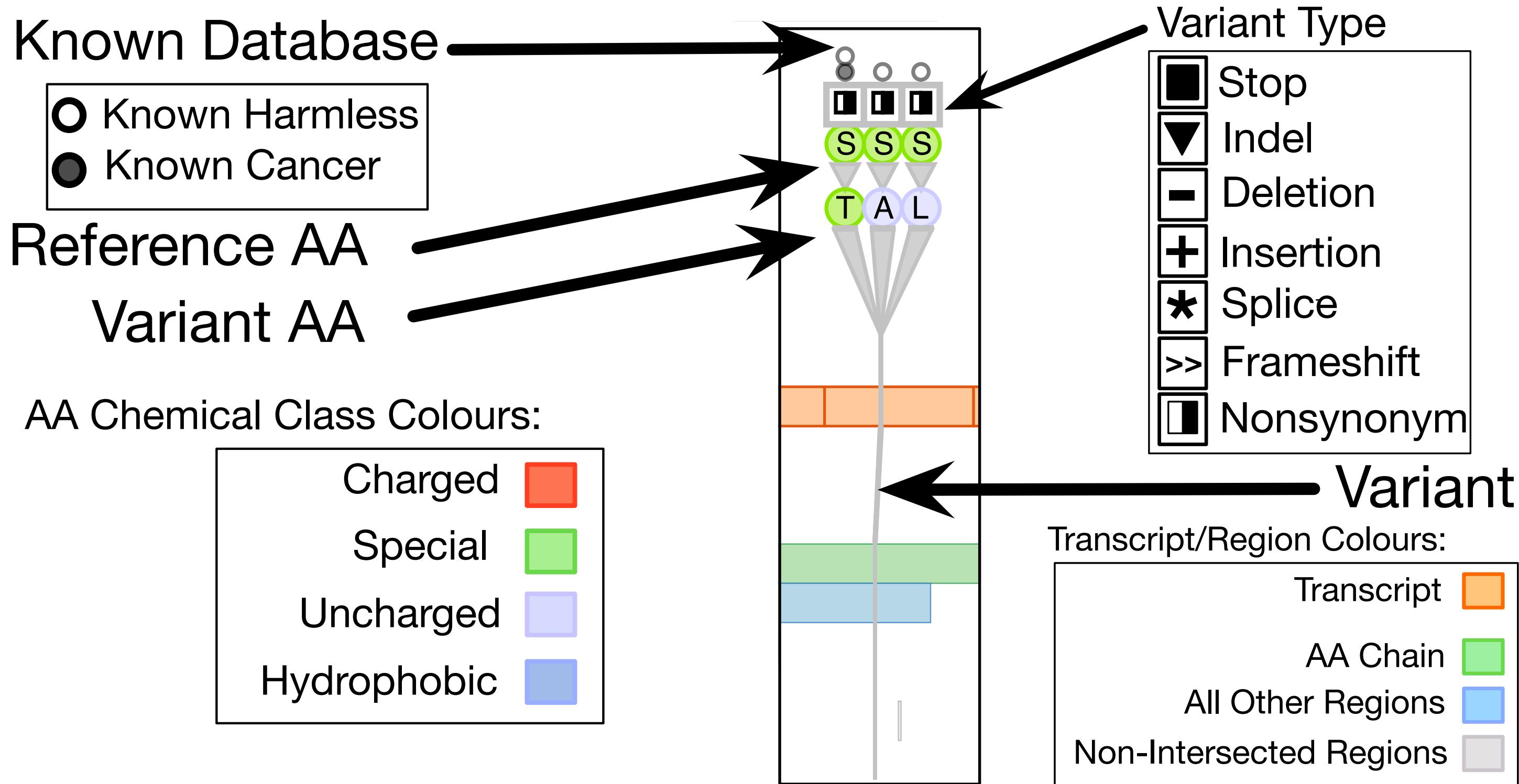
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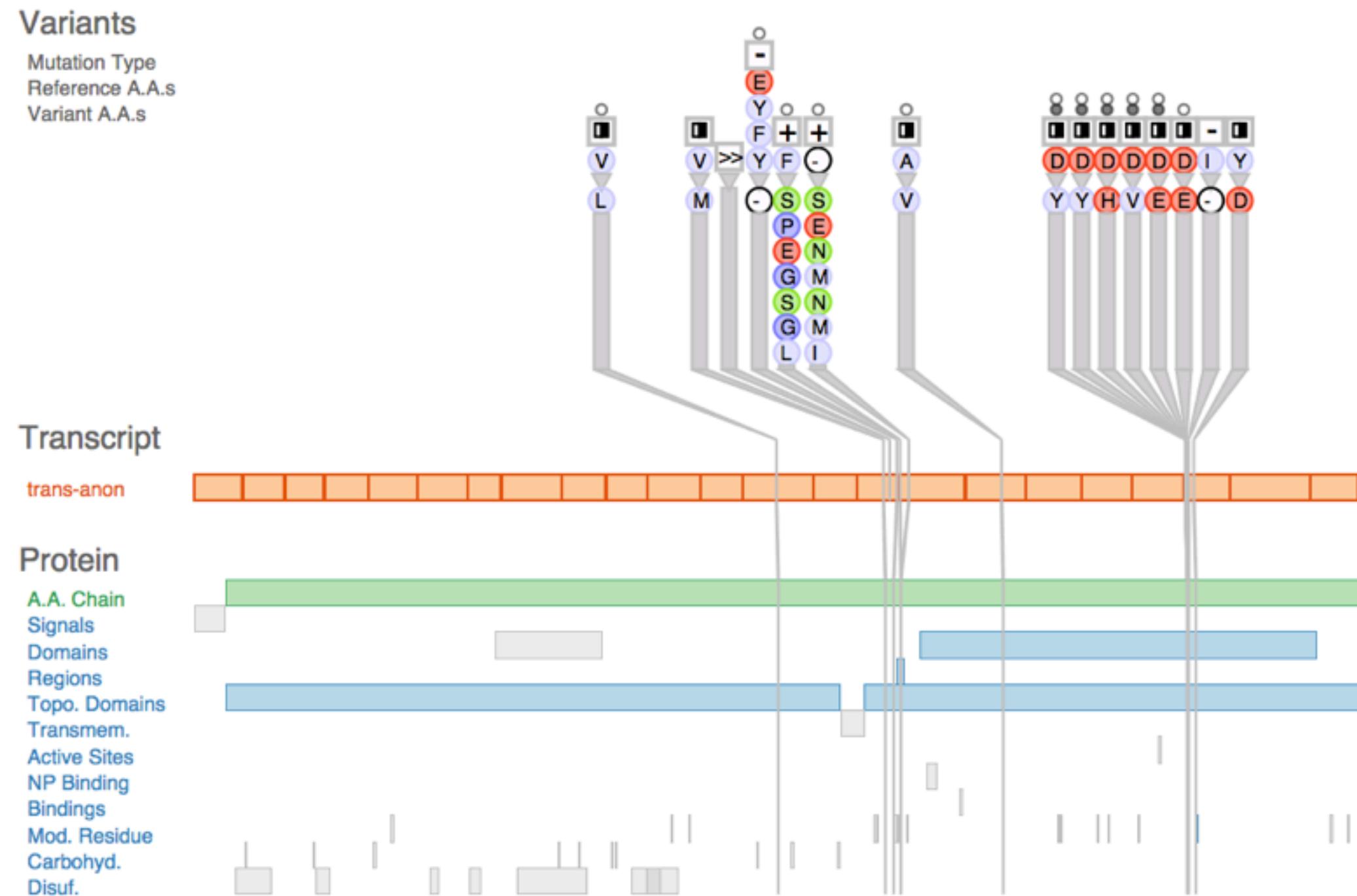


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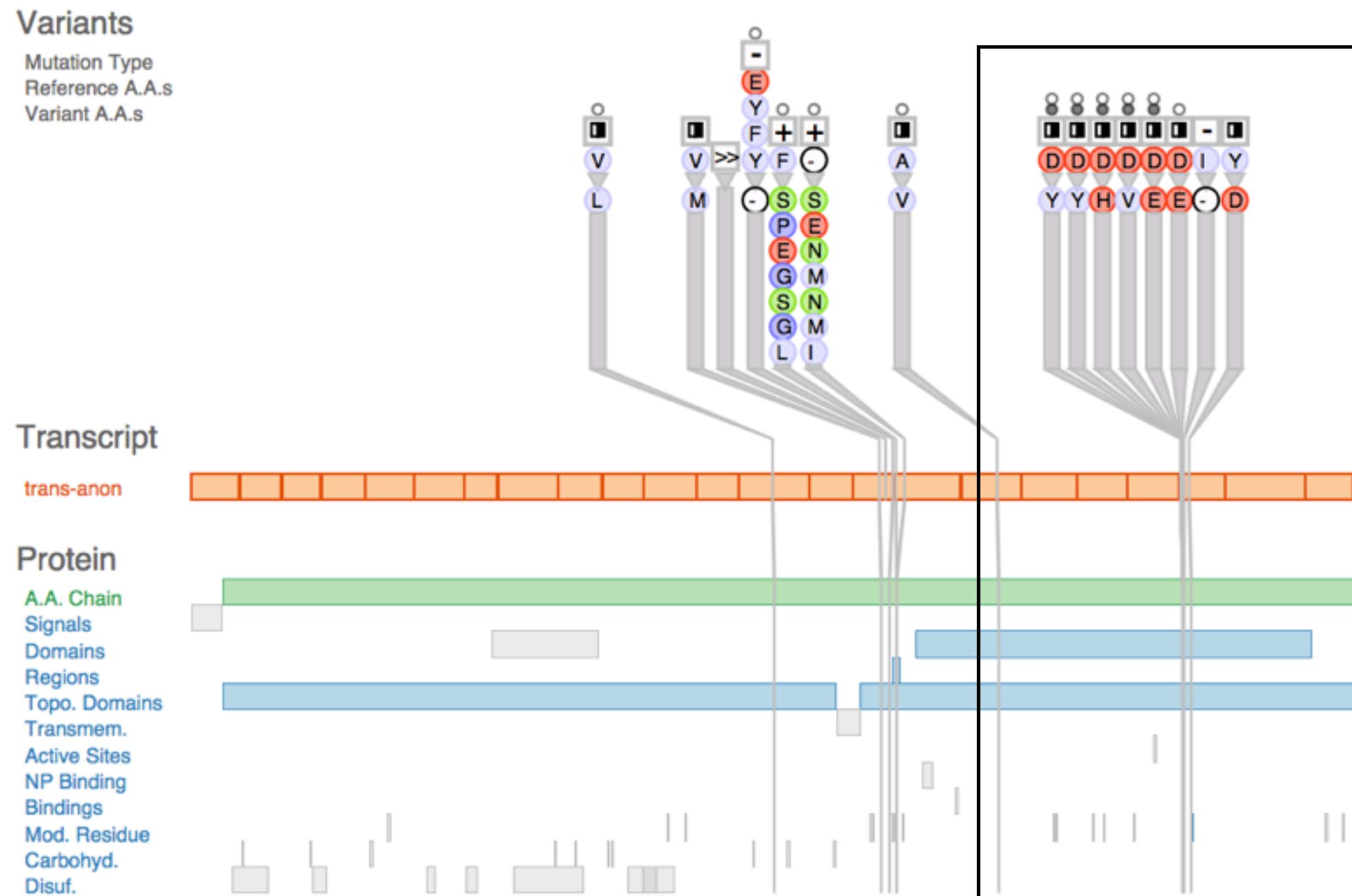


# Results

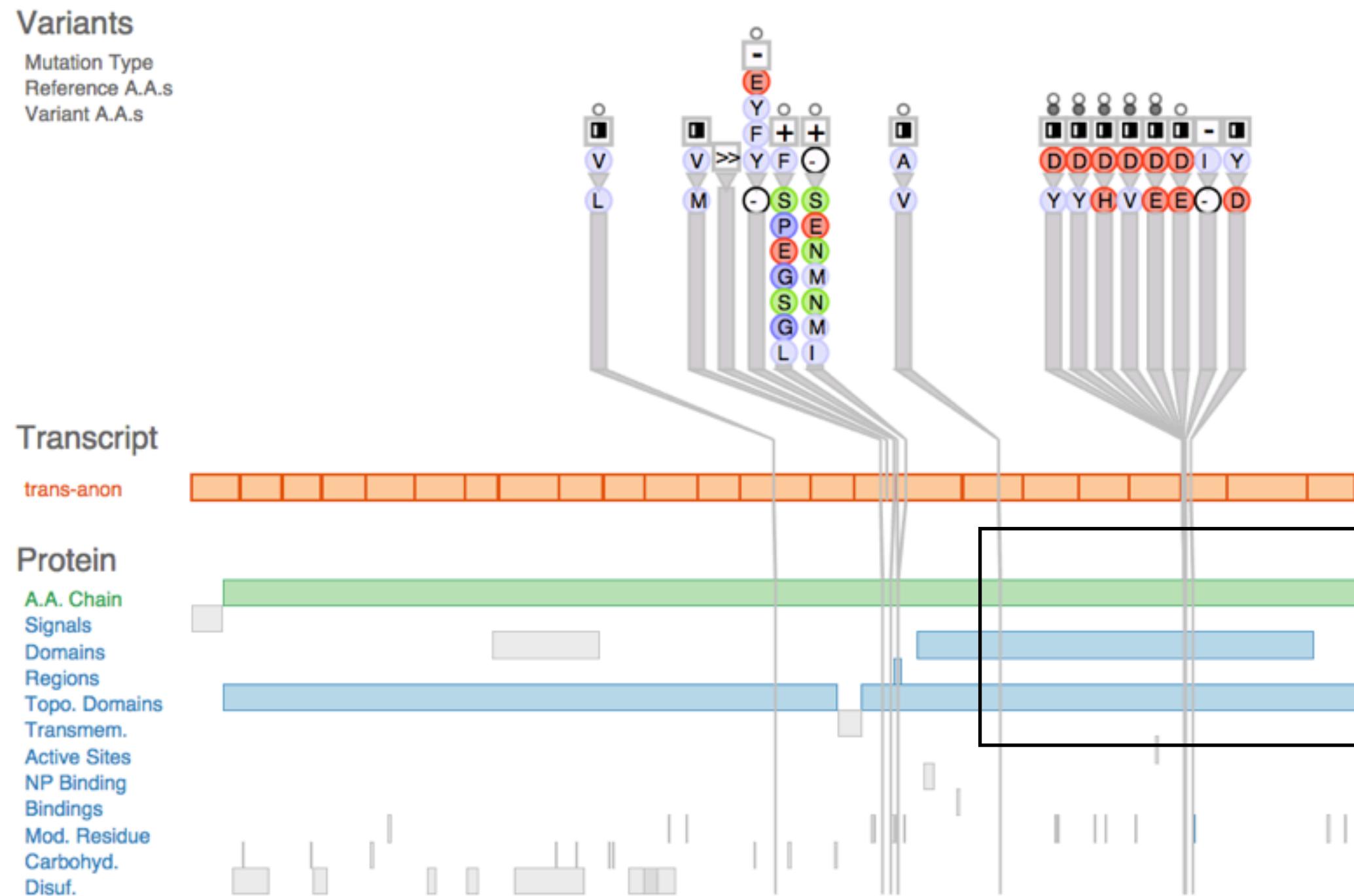
# Verify known leukemia gene: Highly scored by sorting metric



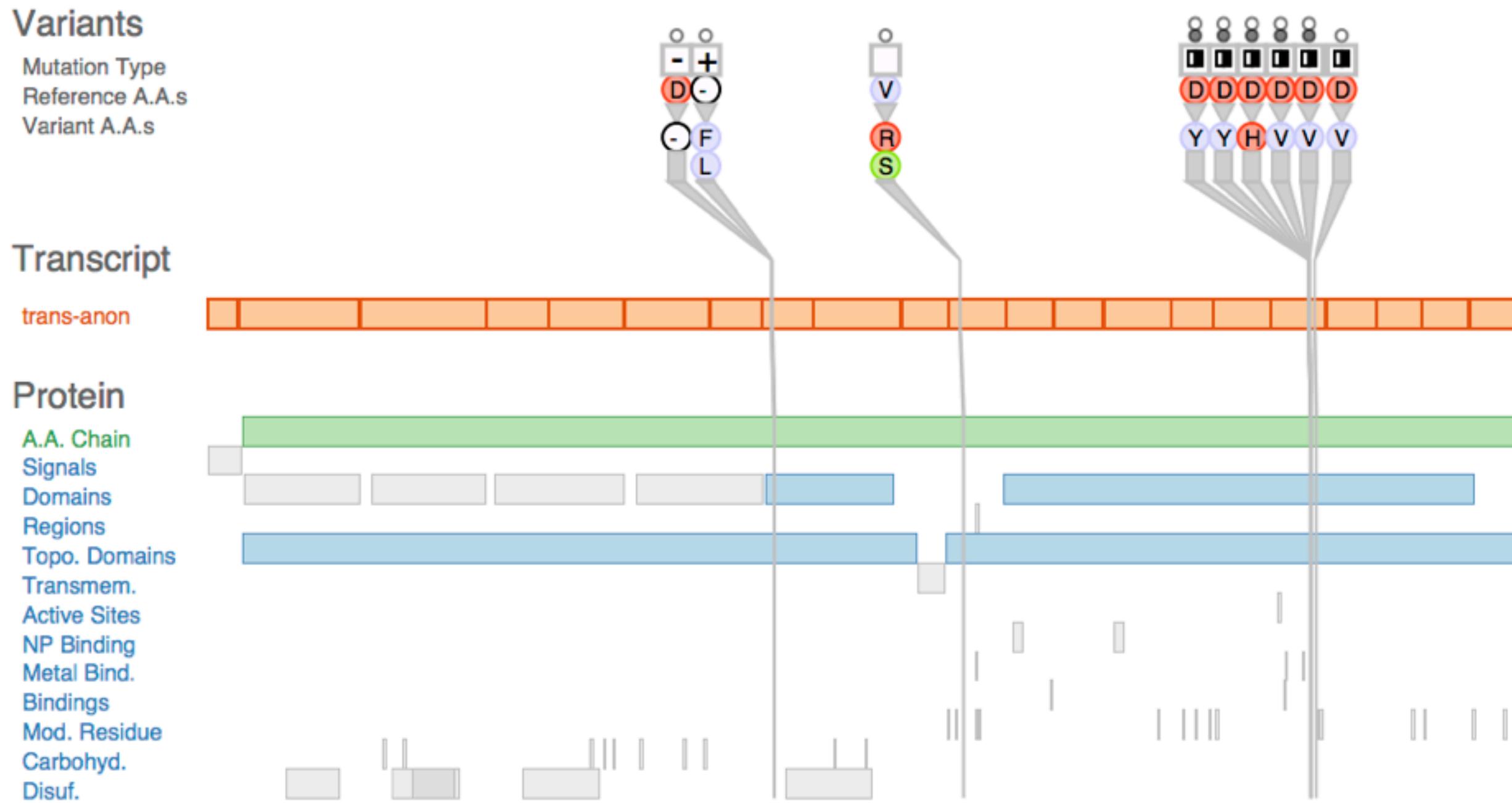
# Visual inspection reveals collocation of variants



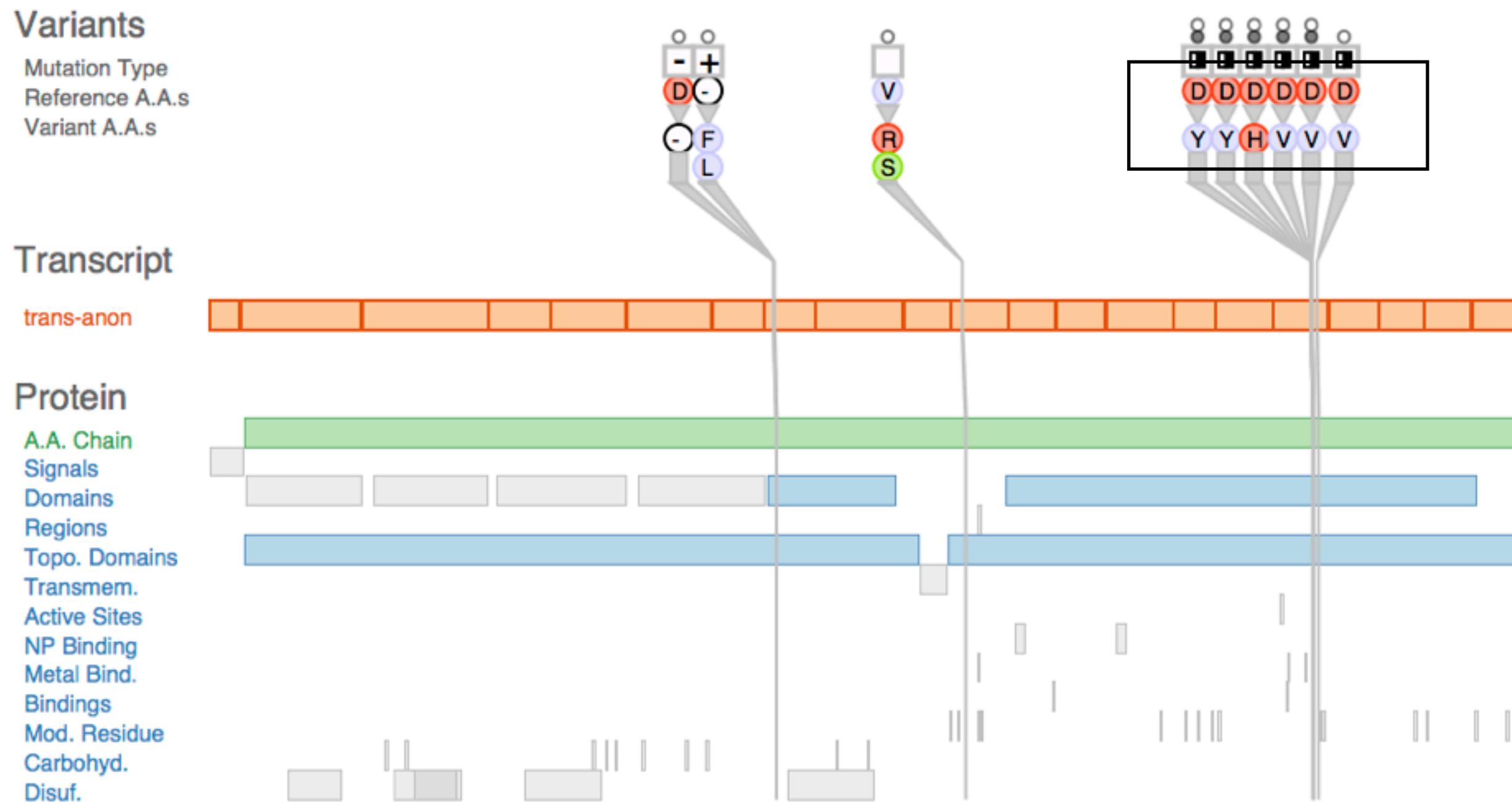
# Several functional protein regions affected



# Highly scored by metric: not previously known, good candidate



# Protein chemical class change evident



# In contrast, low scoring gene

## Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s



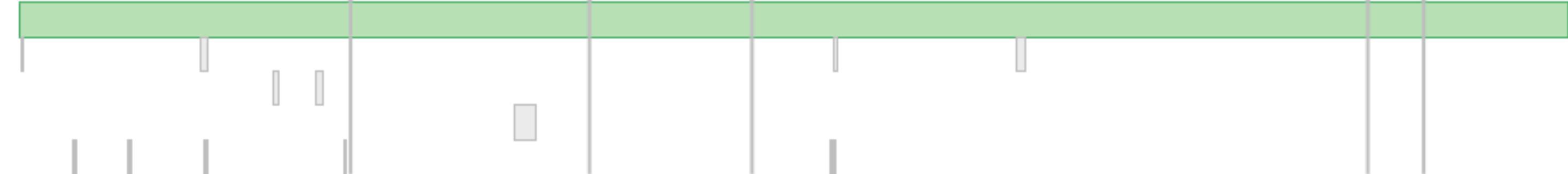
## Transcript

trans-anon

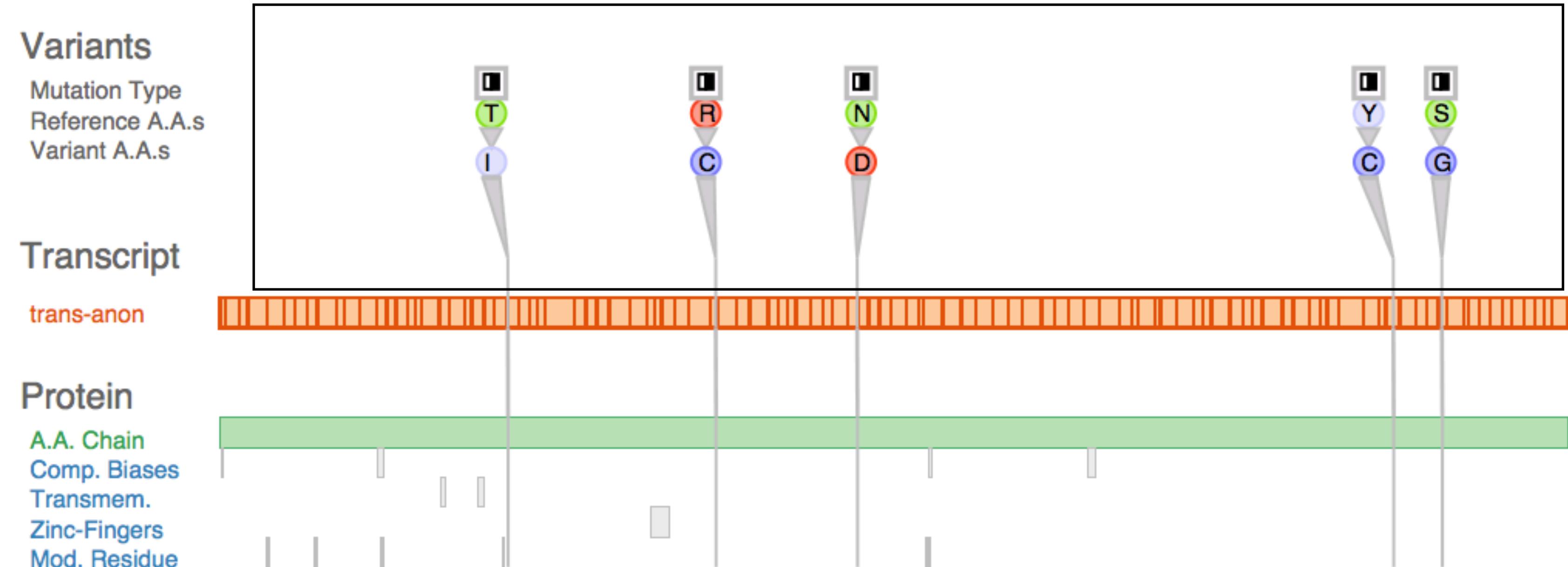


## Protein

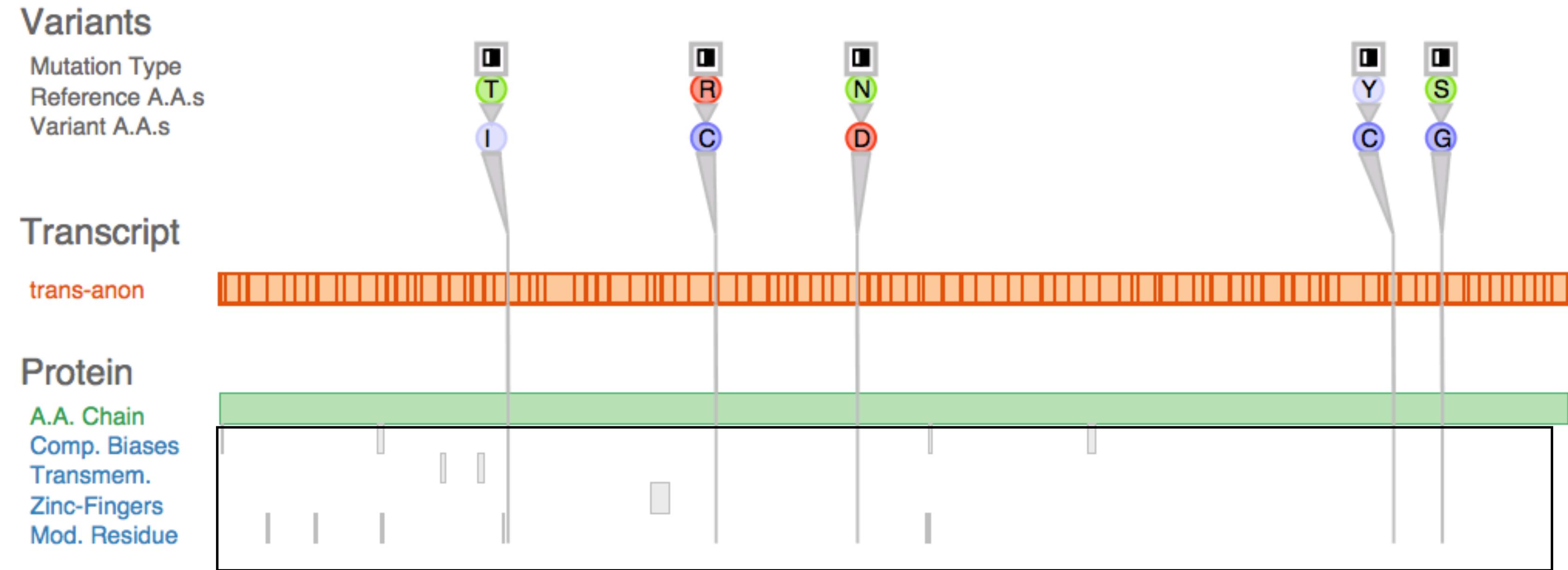
A.A. Chain  
Comp. Biases  
Transmem.  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue



# No collocation of variants



# Mostly unaffected protein regions



# Additional tasks

- task 2: compare patients
  - clinical setting application
  - compare patient data to known harmful variants
  - challenge
    - similarity is loosely understood rather than fully characterized
    - visual inspection for what constitutes a match

# Adapted Variant View with minimal changes

Select Patient: Patient 1  Patient Genes: gene-anon

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon) gene-anon (trans-anon)

Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s

Transcript

trans-anon

Protein

A.A. Chain  
Regions  
Comp. Biases  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue

Variant Details

Variant ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	Effect Level	Effect Type	Gene Name	Trans. Name	Prot. Coord.
pid-anon	31022959	T	C	MODERATE	NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	L815P
pid-anon	31022959	T	C		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	L815P
pid-anon	31023029	G	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	K838N
pid-anon	31024274	T	C	LOW	SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024274	T	C		SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024450	C	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	A1312V
pid-anon	31024704	G	A		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	G1397S
pid-anon	31025163	A	G	MODIFIER	UTR_3_PRIM	gene-anon	trans-anon	-

Comparison Modes

Show Patient Data Only  
 Show Patient + Neighborhood

# Navigate through patient data with list

Select Patient: Patient 1  Patient Genes: gene-anon

---

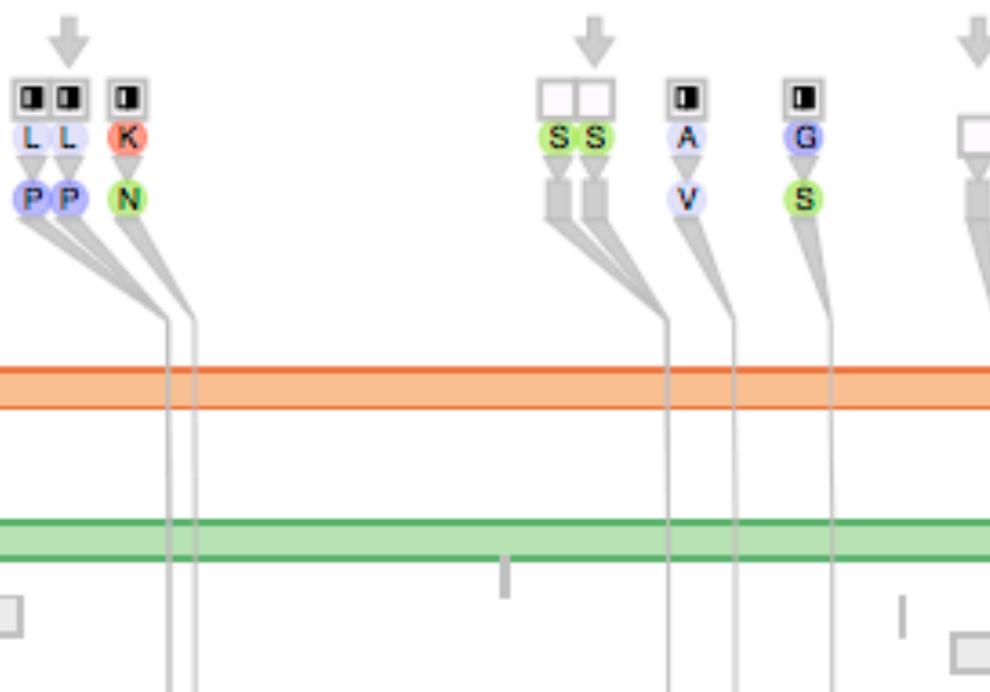
Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon) gene-anon (trans-anon)

Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s

Transcript

trans-anon



Protein

A.A. Chain  
Regions  
Comp. Biases  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue

Variant Details

Variant ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	Effect Level	Effect Type	Gene Name	Trans. Name	Prot. Coord.
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pid-anon	31023029	G	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	K838N
pid-anon	31024274	T	C	LOW	SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024274	T	C		SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024450	C	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	A1312V
pid-anon	31024704	G	A		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	G1397S
pid-anon	31025163	A	G	MODIFIER	UTR_3_PRIM	gene-anon	trans-anon	-

Comparison Modes

Show Patient Data Only  
 Show Patient + Neighborhood

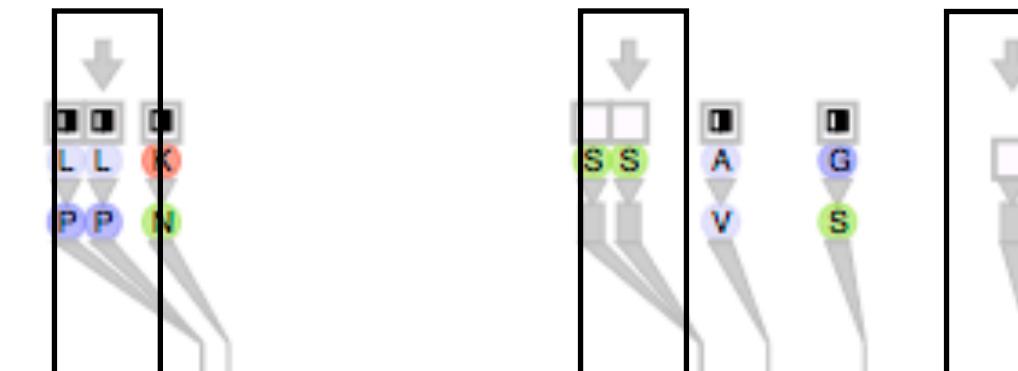
# Patient data emphasized with arrows

Select Patient: Patient 1  Patient Genes: gene-anon

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon) gene-anon (trans-anon)

## Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s



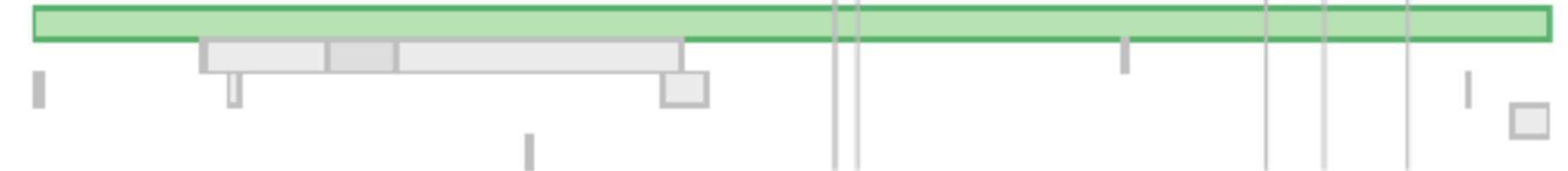
## Transcript

trans-anon



## Protein

A.A. Chain  
Regions  
Comp. Biases  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue



## Variant Details

Variant ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	Effect Level	Effect Type	Gene Name	Trans. Name	Prot. Coord.
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pid-anon	31023029	G	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	K838N
pid-anon	31024274	T	C	LOW	SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024274	T	C		SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253
pid-anon	31024450	C	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	A1312V
pid-anon	31024704	G	A		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	G1397S
pid-anon	31025163	A	G	MODIFIER	UTR_3_PRIM	gene-anon	trans-anon	-

## Comparison Modes

- Show Patient Data Only  
 Show Patient + Neighborhood

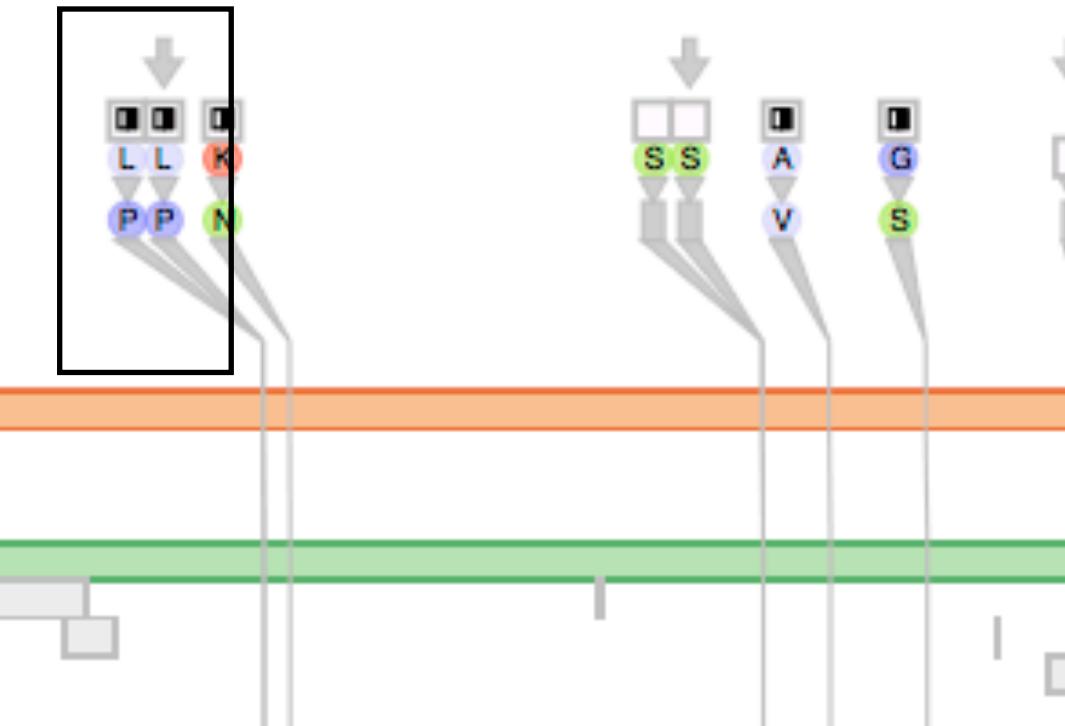
# Patient has same harmful L to P mutation

Select Patient: Patient 1  Patient Genes: gene-anon

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon) gene-anon (trans-anon)

## Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s



## Transcript

trans-anon



## Protein

A.A. Chain  
Regions  
Comp. Biases  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue



## Variant Details

Variant ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	Effect Level	Effect Type	Gene Name	Trans. Name	Prot. Coord.
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pid-anon	31024450	C	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	A1312V
pid-anon	31024704	G	A		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	G1397S
pid-anon	31025163	A	G	MODIFIER	UTR_3_PRIM	gene-anon	trans-anon	-

## Comparison Modes

- Show Patient Data Only  
 Show Patient + Neighborhood

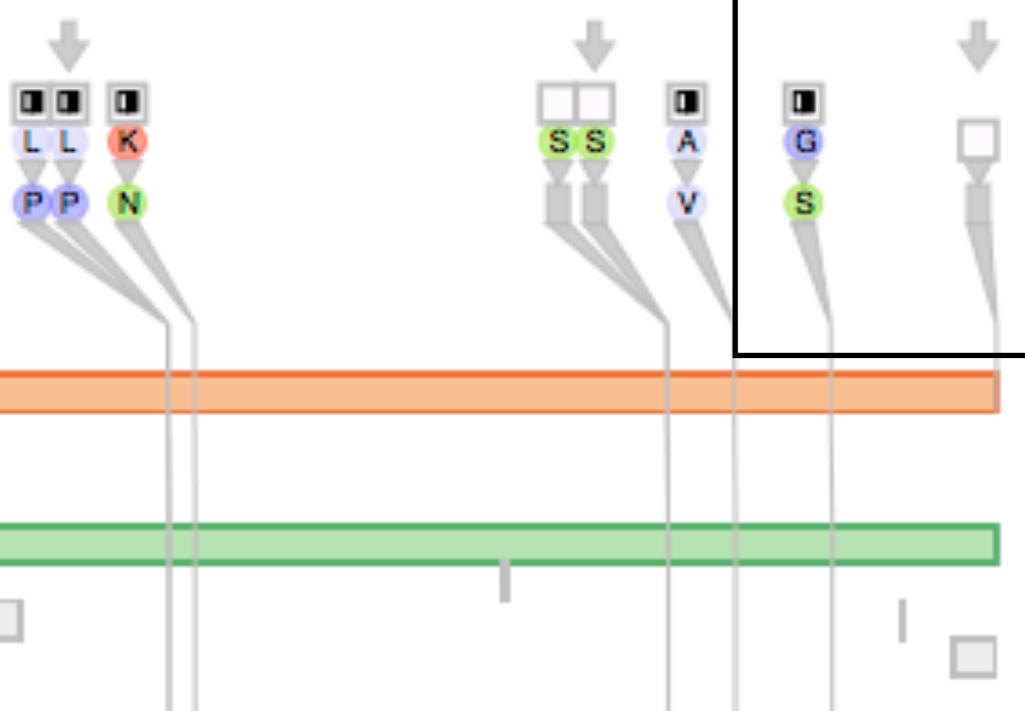
# Nonmatching variants

Select Patient: Patient 1  Patient Genes: gene-anon

Alternative Transcripts: gene-anon (trans-anon) gene-anon (trans-anon)

## Variants

Mutation Type  
Reference A.A.s  
Variant A.A.s



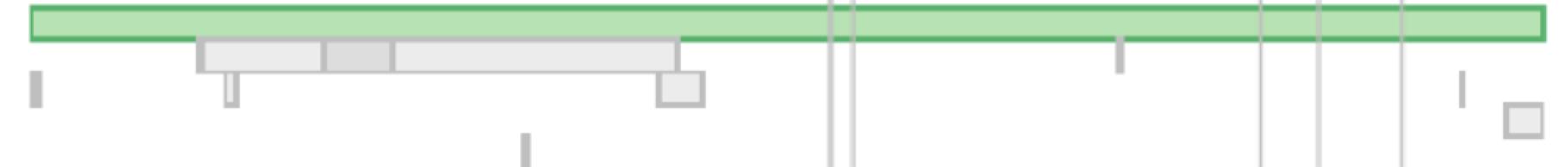
## Transcript

trans-anon



## Protein

A.A. Chain  
Regions  
Comp. Biases  
Zinc-Fingers  
Mod. Residue



## Variant Details

Variant ID	Chr. Coord.	Ref Base	Var Base	Effect Level	Effect Type	Gene Name	Trans. Name	Prot. Coord.	
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pid-anon	31022959	T	C		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	L815P	
pid-anon	31023029	G	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	K838N	
pid-anon	31024274	T	C	LOW	SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253	
pid-anon	31024274	T	C		SYNONYMOUS	gene-anon	trans-anon	S1253	
pid-anon	31024450	C	T		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	A1312V	
pid-anon	31024704	G	A		NON_SYNONY	gene-anon	trans-anon	G1397S	
pid-anon	31025163	A	G	MODIFIER	UTR_3_PRIM	gene-anon	trans-anon	-	

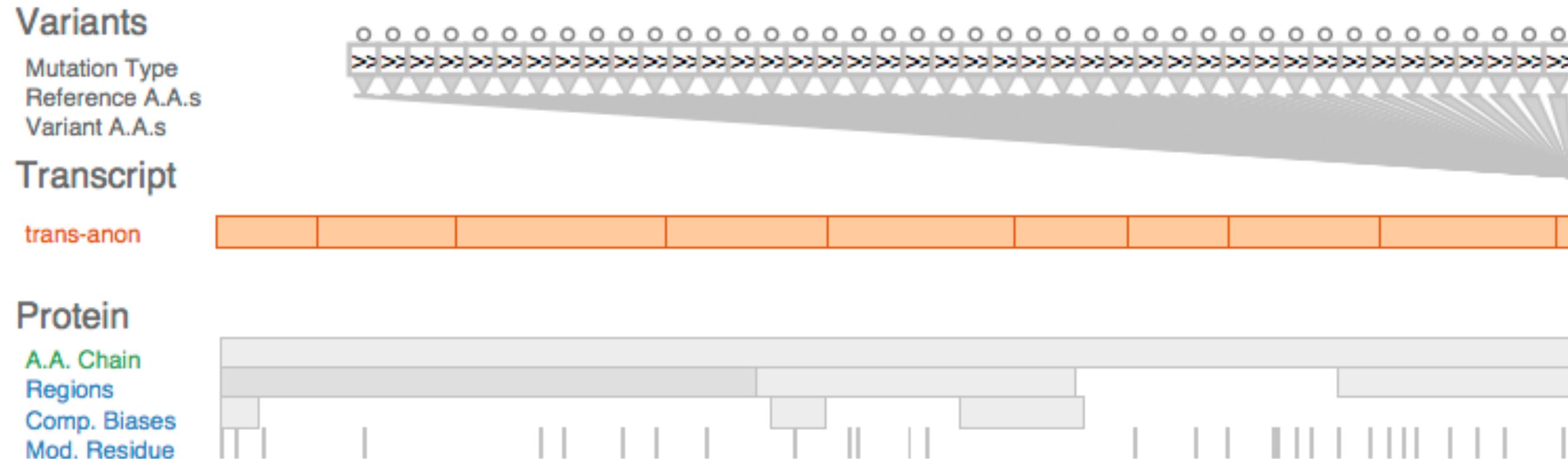
## Comparison Modes

- Show Patient Data Only  
 Show Patient + Neighborhood

# Additional tasks

- task 3: debug pipeline
  - data cleansing before analysis
  - analysts originally thought pipeline fully debugged
    - no perceived need for vis support

# Tool revealed errors in the data

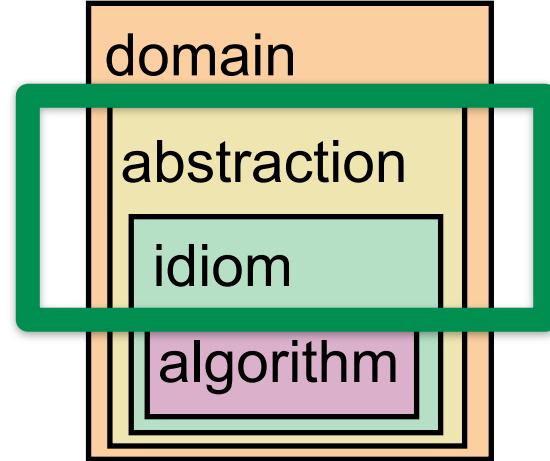


*The tool exposed artifacts in the data that slid past at least two rounds of quality metric filtering ... this type of problem would not have been caught by our previous, automated methods.*

- Analyst 3

# Reduce from big data to manageable data

- at abstraction level, not algorithm level
  - filter away huge amounts of detail
  - transform from variant centric to gene centric

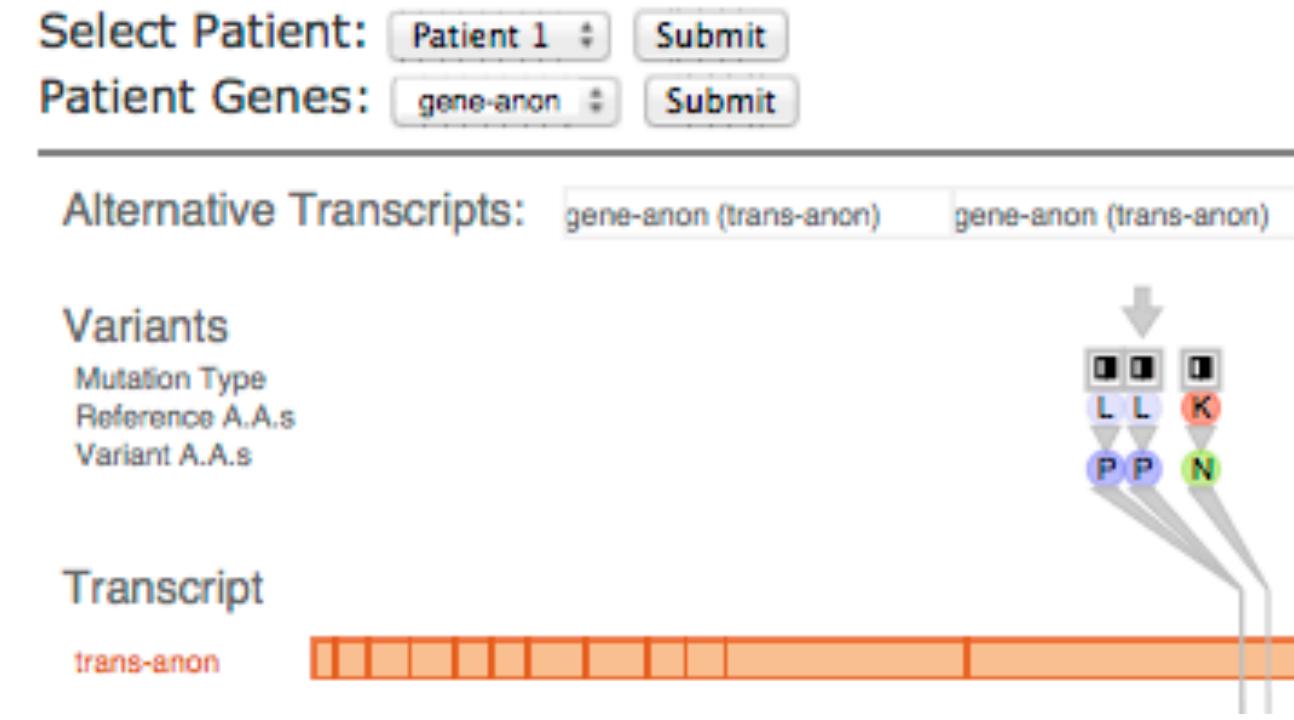


[A Nested Model of Visualization Design and Validation.

Munzner. *IEEE TVCG* 15(6):921-928, 2009 (Proc. InfoVis 2009). ]

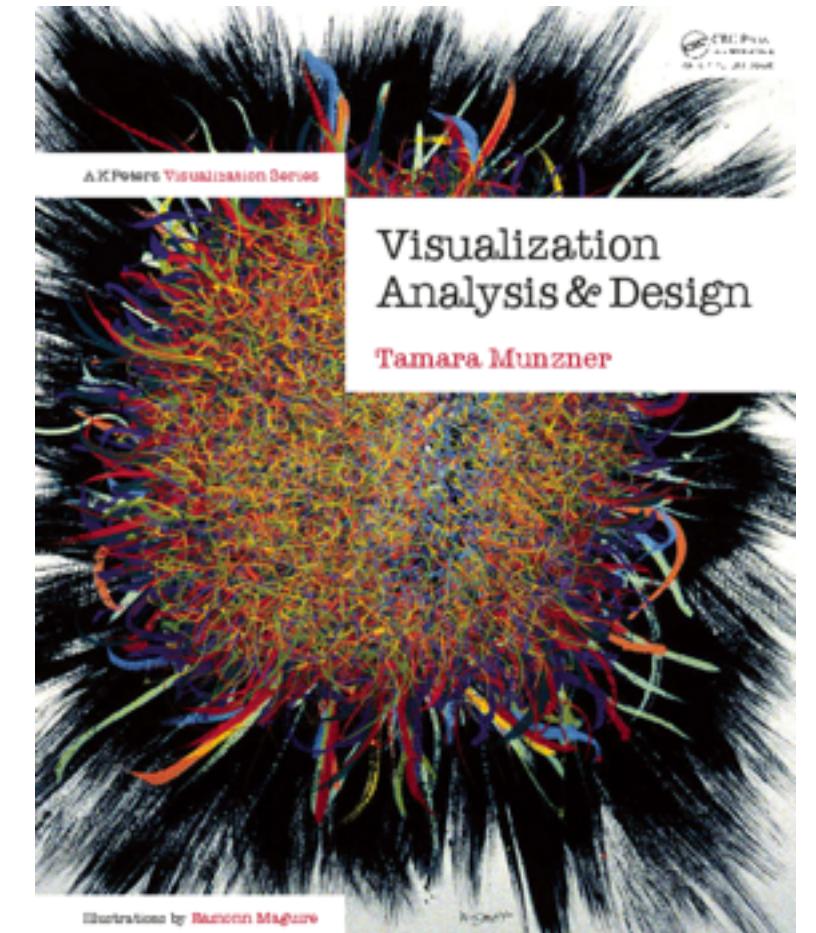
# Privacy implications

- anonymizing
  - protect patients: strip/change patient names
  - protect researchers: strip/change gene names
  - deanonymization threats: minor in this case
- future projects
  - genomics meets clinical meets administrative meets demographic
    - enable data re-use: link individuals across datasets to create research study cohorts
    - health research opportunity: major
    - deanonymization threat: major
  - ferociously privacy-protected data silos/vaults
    - can't see data without permission; what to ask for?
    - upcoming project: privacy preserving visual metadata browsing



# More Information

- paper & open source download  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/labs/imager/tr/2013/VariantView/>
- this talk  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/talks.html#think15>
- papers, videos, software, talks, courses  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/group/infovis>  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm>
- book: Visualization Analysis and Design. CRC Press 2014.  
<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/~tmm/vadbook>
  - 20% promo code for book+ebook combo: HVN17
  - <http://www.crcpress.com/product/isbn/9781466508910>
- acknowledgements
  - funding: VIVA, Aeroinfo/Boeing, MITACS



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