

**Methods for genome-scale gene
perturbation studies of the TRAIL-
induced apoptosis pathway in mammalian
cell culture**

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Declaration

This dissertation is my own work and contains nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration with others, except as specified in the text and acknowledgements. No part of this work has been submitted for any other degree at this or any University.

This dissertation does not exceed the page limit specified by the Biology Degree Committee.

Ian Sudbery, November 2007.

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Abstract

Modern techniques, particularly RNA interference, but also the systematic over-expression of full length open-reading frames (ORFs), have promised to allow traditional genetic screening paradigms to be transferred to mammalian cell culture systems in order to study medically relevant pathways and annotate function onto the genome.

TNF Related Apoptosis Inducing Ligand (TRAIL) induces apoptosis in many tumour cells, but not in the majority of normal cells. As such it has generated much excitement as a potential anti-cancer treatment. However, the molecular basis of the regulation of sensitivity to TRAIL is not fully understood. Here an assay for the sensitivity of HeLa cells to TRAIL is used to compare different approaches to RNAi screening. Various tests indicated that RNAi screening for novel TRAIL genes is feasible using siRNAs but not shRNAs.

RNAi screens were carried out using both a library of siRNAs targeting 901 Kinase and Phosphatases and a larger library targeting the “Druggable Genome”. Genes having the largest effect on TRAIL sensitivity were rigorously confirmed and controlled for off-target effects using multiple siRNAs and multiple assays. Thus eight novel genes involved in TRAIL-induced apoptosis were identified (Sharpin, MAST4, IKBKE, MAX, IGF1R, PDE11A, INADL and TEGT).

A thorough examination of the seed sequences of high scoring siRNAs revealed that several seed sequences were over-represented in high scoring siRNAs. This suggests that screening may enrich for siRNAs with relevant off-target effects. In addition comparison of these seed sequences to those of natural miRNAs identify four candidate miRNAs which may be involved in regulation of TRAIL-induced apoptosis.

A screen was also carried out to assess the effect of the over-expression of 288 full-length ORFs from chromosome 22. Several clones that have a reproducible effect on the sensitivity of cells to TRAIL were identified, although failure of these genes to have an effect in secondary assays mean that their physiological involvement in the pathway is unknown.

In conclusion, genome-scale systematic gene perturbation studies are powerful tools for annotation of gene function, and for isolating novel genes in medically relevant pathways, but they must be used with care and an awareness of their possible pitfalls.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
ABSTRACT	IV
TABLE OF CONTENTS	V
LIST OF FIGURES	IX
LIST OF TABLES	XII
ABBREVIATIONS	XIV
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Genetic Screening.....	3
1.2 RNA interference.....	9
1.2.1 Triggers of RNAi.....	11
1.2.2 Mechanism.....	13
1.2.3 Design of potent RNAi inducing agents.....	16
1.2.4 Specificity.....	17
1.2.5 RNAi Screening.....	23
1.3 TRAIL-induced apoptosis.....	30
1.3.1 Mechanism of TRAIL-induced apoptosis.....	30
1.3.2 Regulation of TRAIL sensitivity.....	32
1.3.3 Genes involved in TRAIL-induced apoptosis.....	39
1.3.4 The physiological role of TRAIL.....	40
1.3.5 Clinical prospects for TRAIL.....	42
1.4 Aims.....	43
2 METHODS	45
2.1 Common Solutions and Media.....	46
2.1.1 LB Broth.....	46
2.1.2 2XLB Broth (low salt).....	46
2.1.3 Phosphate Buffered Saline (PBS).....	46
2.1.4 Creosol Red Loading Buffer.....	46
2.1.5 T0.1E.....	46
2.1.6 siRNA Suspension Buffer.....	46
2.1.7 HeLa Growth Media.....	47
2.1.8 Treatment/ Assay media.....	47
2.2 Common cell culture methods.....	47
2.2.1 Routine Passage of cells.....	47
2.2.2 Defrosting of cells.....	48
2.2.3 RNA transfection of cells.....	48
2.2.4 Transfection of plasmid DNA.....	49

2.2.5	<i>Isolation of total cellular RNA</i>	50
2.2.6	<i>Preparation of samples for determination of mRNA knock-down by qRT-PCR</i>	52
2.2.7	<i>Screening Methods</i>	53
2.3	Common molecular biology methods	55
2.3.1	<i>Transformation of plasmid DNA into E.coli</i>	55
2.3.2	<i>Digestion with Restriction Enzymes</i>	56
2.3.3	<i>Agarose Gel electrophoresis</i>	56
2.3.4	<i>KOD Polymerase Chain Reaction (KOD PCR)</i>	57
2.3.5	<i>Quantitative Polymerase Chain Reaction (qPCR)</i>	57
2.3.6	<i>Reverse Transcription</i>	58
2.3.7	<i>Measuring efficiency of qRT-PCR oligonucleotide primers</i>	59
2.3.8	<i>Measurement of RNAi mediated mRNA knock-down by qRT-PCR</i>	59
2.4	Computational methods.....	60
2.4.1	<i>Design of oligonucleotide primers for qRT-PCR</i>	60
2.4.2	<i>Analysis of screening data</i>	60
2.4.3	<i>Analysis of seed sequences</i>	61
2.5	Chapter 3 methods	63
2.5.1	<i>TRAIL cytotoxicity assays</i>	63
2.5.2	<i>Assessment of plasmid transfection efficiency</i>	65
2.5.3	<i>Cloning of hairpins targeting Caspase 8</i>	66
2.5.4	<i>Comparison of effect of siRNA and shRNA mediated knock-down of Caspase – 8</i>	69
2.5.5	<i>Blind pseudo-screens</i>	70
2.5.6	<i>Comparison of siRNA mediated and shRNA mediated knock-down of 18 genes associated with the TRAIL pathway</i>	70
2.5.7	<i>qRT-PCR of positive control knock-downs</i>	71
2.6	Chapter 4 and 5 methods.....	71
2.6.1	<i>siRNA library screens</i>	71
2.6.2	<i>Reconfirmation of siRNAs from Kinase and Phosphatase screen</i>	72
2.6.3	<i>qRT-PCR of screen hit siRNAs</i>	72
2.6.4	<i>Luminescent Caspase assays</i>	72
2.6.5	<i>Measurement of sensitivity of cells to inducers of apoptosis</i>	73
2.6.6	<i>Re-screen of candidate hits from the druggable genome screen.</i>	75
2.7	Chapter 6 methods	76
2.7.1	<i>Chromosome 22 ORF screen</i>	76
2.7.2	<i>Creation of the pcDNA3.GW.NoTag vector</i>	76
2.7.3	<i>Gateway LR recombination reactions</i>	78
2.7.4	<i>qPCR of ORF expression</i>	79
3	A TRAIL APOPTOSIS ASSAY AND COMPARISON OF RNAI SCREENING METHODS...	80
3.1	Introduction.....	81
3.1.1	<i>Assays for apoptosis</i>	81

3.1.2	<i>The pSHAG-MAGIC vector and the Expression Arrest library</i>	83
3.1.3	<i>Measurements of the effectiveness of a screen</i>	84
3.2	Demonstration of cytotoxicity of TRAIL.....	85
3.3	Rescue of TRAIL induced cytotoxicity	86
3.3.1	<i>Rescue of TRAIL induced cytotoxicity by siRNA</i>	86
3.3.2	<i>Construction of pSM2.shCasp8.1/2</i>	88
3.3.3	<i>Optimisation of DNA transfection</i>	89
3.3.4	<i>Confirmation of Caspase-8 mRNA knock-down</i>	96
3.4	Comparison of siRNA and shRNA ^{mir} performance	98
3.4.1	<i>Comparison of the effect of siRNAs and shRNA^{mir}s against Caspase-8 on TRAIL induced cytotoxicity</i>	98
3.4.2	<i>Blind pseudo-screens show a clone-by-clone screen is practical with siRNA, but not shRNA^{mir}s</i>	99
3.4.3	<i>Differences in assay outcome between siRNAs and shRNA^{mir}s are due to different knock-down efficiencies for a wide range of positive controls</i>	101
3.5	Conclusion	104
4	AN siRNA SCREEN OF 897 KINASES AND PHOSPHATASES.....	108
4.1	Introduction.....	109
4.1.1	<i>Kinases and Phosphatases</i>	109
4.1.2	<i>The Library</i>	110
4.1.3	<i>Analysis of screening data</i>	110
4.2	Screen design, execution and data analysis.....	112
4.3	Screen quality and analysis of controls	116
4.4	Screen results	118
4.4.1	<i>Hit selection</i>	122
4.4.2	<i>Analysis of genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway</i>	123
4.5	Confirmation of hits	124
4.6	Experimental characterisation of confirmed hits	129
4.6.1	<i>Effect of knock-down of confirmed hits on TRAIL ligand dependent activation of caspases.</i> 129	
4.6.2	<i>Effect of knock-down of confirmed hits on the sensitivity of HeLa cells to a selection of apoptosis inducing conditions</i>	132
4.7	Discussion and conclusions.....	139
4.7.1	<i>The Screen</i>	139
4.7.2	<i>The Hits</i>	143
4.7.3	<i>Conclusions</i>	148
5	AN siRNA SCREEN OF THE DRUGGABLE GENOME	150
5.1	The druggable genome.....	151
5.2	Screen execution and initial data processing.....	152
5.3	Screen quality and analysis of controls	156
5.4	Screen Results.....	158

5.4.1	<i>Analysis of genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway.....</i>	162
5.5	Confirmation of hits.....	165
5.6	Characterisation of hit genes.....	171
5.7	Analysis of seed sequences.....	174
5.7.1	<i>Gene Set Enrichment Analysis of seed sequences.....</i>	180
5.7.2	<i>Frequency of hit and enriched seed sequences in 3' UTR sequences.....</i>	182
5.7.3	<i>Occurrence of hit seed sequences in genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway..</i>	183
5.7.4	<i>Identifying possible off-target transcripts for hit and enriched seeds.....</i>	187
5.7.5	<i>Micro RNA seeds.....</i>	193
5.8	Discussion and conclusions.....	193
5.8.1	<i>The Screen.....</i>	194
5.8.2	<i>Hit and enriched seeds.....</i>	198
5.8.3	<i>The Hits.....</i>	202
5.8.4	<i>Conclusions.....</i>	206
6	AN OVEREXPRESSION SCREEN OF ORFs ON CHROMOSOME 22.....	209
6.1	The Chromosome 22 ORF collection.....	210
6.1.1	<i>Gateway cloning.....</i>	212
6.2	Design and execution of screen.....	212
6.3	Screen Results.....	215
6.4	Confirmation of Hit genes.....	216
6.5	Characterisation of hit ORFs.....	225
6.5.1	<i>Effect on TRAIL-induced Caspase activity.....</i>	225
6.5.2	<i>Effect on sensitivity to other apoptosis inducing conditions.....</i>	227
6.6	Discussion and conclusions.....	228
6.6.1	<i>The screen.....</i>	231
6.6.2	<i>The Hits.....</i>	234
6.6.3	<i>Conclusions.....</i>	236
7	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.....	238
7.1	Future directions.....	246
7.2	Conclusion.....	249
8	REFERENCES.....	251
9	APPENDICES.....	A-1
	Appendix A Sequence of siRNAs Used.....	A-1
	Appendix B Sequence of oligonucleotide primers used for quantitative PCR.....	A-13

Full results of screens are available on the included CD or at

http://www.sanger.ac.uk/HGP/Chr22/RNAi/TRAIL_Kinase/
http://www.sanger.ac.uk/HGP/Chr22/RNAi/TRAIL_DG/
<http://www.sanger.ac.uk/HGP/Chr22/ORFScreen.txt>

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 RNAi triggers used in mammalian cell culture.	12
Figure 1.2 A possible model for siRNA mediated mRNA degradation	16
Figure 1.3 Sequence specific and sequence independent effects of siRNAs.	18
Figure 1.4 Different types of seed sequence as defined by (Lewis, Burge & Bartel 2005)	19
Figure 1.5 Paradigms for genome-scale RNAi screening.....	24
Figure 1.6 A simplified schematic of events leading to TRAIL-induced Apoptosis	32
Figure 2.1 Scheme for growing cells for use in screening.....	53
Figure 3.1 TRAIL cytotoxicity assays.....	83
Figure 3.2 HeLa S3 cells are sensitive to TRAIL	87
Figure 3.3 siRNA mediated knock-down of Caspase-8 rescues TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	88
Figure 3.4 Cloning of shRNA ^{mir} constructs in the pSM2 vector	90
Figure 3.5 Selection of transfected cells using puromycin.....	91
Figure 3.6 HeLa cells are sensitive to TRAIL.....	92
Figure 3.7 shRNAmir mediated knock-down of Caspase-8 rescues TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	93
Figure 3.8 Optimisation of RNAi-mediated rescue from TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	95
Figure 3.9 Optimisation of RNAi-mediated rescue from TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity using reverse transfection.....	96
Figure 3.10 qRT-PCR confirmation of Caspase 8 knock-down	97
Figure 3.11 Comparison of the effects of shRNA- and siRNA-mediated knock-down of Caspase 8 on TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity.	99
Figure 3.12 Histograms showing distributions of positive and negative controls in blind pseudo-screens.	101
Figure 3.13 Effects of knock-down of 18 positive controls on TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity.	102
Figure 3.14 Comparison of effect of knock-down of 18 positive controls by siRNA or shRNA ^{mir} on TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity.....	103

Figure 3.15 qRT-PCR measurement of knock-down by siRNAs/shRNAmirs targeting 13 positive controls	104
Figure 4.1 Plate layout used in screen	112
Figure 4.2 Boxplot of dynamic ranges of plates from different screen replicates.....	113
Figure 4.3 Normalization of data from screen of Kinases and phosphatases.	114
Figure 4.4 Relationship between standard deviation and rank of the mean for siRNAs.	115
Figure 4.5 Assesment of screen quality and controls.....	117
Figure 4.6 Results of siRNA screen of Kinases and Phosphatase	119
Figure 4.7 Confirmation of the effect of 14 genes from a screen of Kinases and Phosphatases.....	126
Figure 4.8 Order of caspases in the caspase cascade	130
Figure 4.9 Effect of siRNAs targeting confirmed hits on TRAIL-induced caspase activation	131
Figure 4.10 Knockdown of confirmed hit genes affects sensitivity of cells to a range of concentrations of TRAIL ligand.....	133
Figure 4.11 Knockdown of confirmed hit genes affects sensitivity of cells to FAS ligand induced apoptosis.	135
Figure 4.12 Effect of knockdown of confirmed hit genes on sensitivity to H ₂ O ₂ induced cytotoxicity.....	137
Figure 4.13 Effects of knockdown of confirmed hit genes on sensitivity to UV radiation induced cell death.....	138
Figure 5.1 Composition of the Qiagen Human Druggable genome siRNA Set V2.0 by gene family.....	152
Figure 5.2 Relationship between pre-treatment viability and sensitivity to TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	154
Figure 5.3 Normalisation of data from screen of druggable genome.	155
Figure 5.4 Relationship between standard deviation and rank of the mean for siRNAs.	156
Figure 5.5 Assessment of screen quality and controls.....	157
Figure 5.6 Results of siRNA screen of the druggable genome.....	159
Figure 5.7 Enrichment plot for GSEA of genes previously associated with TRAIL pathway	

in the screen of the druggable genome	164
Figure 5.8 Confirmation of candidate hits from a screen of the druggable genome	168
Figure 5.9 Effect of transfection of siRNAs targeting hit genes on TRAIL-induced Caspase activity	172
Figure 5.10 Different types of seed sequence as defined by (Lewis, Burge & Bartel 2005) .	178
Figure 5.11 Average frequency of ‘Hit’ seed sequences in all 3’ UTRs compared to average frequency of all possible seed sequences	181
Figure 5.12 Frequencies of ‘enriched’ seed sequences in all 3’ UTRs compared to the all possible seed sequences.	182
Figure 5.13 Average frequencies of “hit” seed sequences compared to all possible seed sequences in 3’ UTRs of genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway	186
Figure 5.14 Frequency of “enriched” hexamer seeds compared to all possible hexamer seeds in 3’UTRs of genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway	187
Figure 6.1 An annotation driven ORF cloning strategy (from Collins et al. 2004).....	211
Figure 6.2 Relationship between pre-treatment viability and sensitivity to TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	213
Figure 6.3 Normalisation of data from over-expression screen of Chromosome 22 ORFs	214
Figure 6.4 Relationship between rank of mean and standard deviation between replicates of Chromosome 22 ORF expression screen	215
Figure 6.5 Correlations in data from chromosome 22 ORF expression screen	216
Figure 6.6 Scores of clones from screen of chromosome 22 ORFs	217
Figure 6.7 Effect of transfection of candidate hit ORFs on sensitivity to TRAIL-induced cytotoxicity	220
Figure 6.8 Renormalised effect of transfection of candidate hit ORFs on sensitivity to TRAIL induced cytotoxicity	222
Figure 6.9 Expression of hit ORFs in cells transfected with ORF expressing constructs	224
Figure 6.10 Effect of over-expression of hit ORFs on TRAIL-induced Caspase activity	226
Figure 6.11 Effect of expression of hit ORFs on sensitivity of H ₂ O ₂ induced cytotoxicity.	229
Figure 6.12 Effects of expression of hit ORFs on sensitivity of cells to UV irradiation	230

List of Tables

Table 1-1 Comparison of the shRNA library available at start of project.....	13
Table 1-2 Genes involved required for TRAIL induced apoptosis.....	40
Table 3-3 Interpretation of the Z-factor values	85
Table 3-4 Comparison of transfection reagents.	89
Table 4-1 Summary statistics of controls in Kinase and Phosphatase screen.....	118
Table 4-2 Top scoring siRNAs from an siRNA screen of Kinases and Phosphatases.	120
Table 4-3 Extract from table summarizing screen results on a per gene basis.	121
Table 4-4 Results from this screen of genes previously associated with the TRAIL apoptosis pathway.....	124
Table 4-5 Categorisation of genes selected from confirmation from kinase and phosphatase screen.	127
Table 4-6 Summary of experimental characterisation of confirmed hits from screen of Kinase and Phosphatase screen.	138
Table 4-7 – Best matches of MAST4 siRNAs against other members of the MAST family .	146
Table 5-1 Summary statistics for different well types in screen of druggable genome.....	158
Table 5-2 Top scoring siRNAs from screen of the druggable genome	160
Table 5-3 Extract from table summarising results of screen of the druggable genome on a per gene basis.....	161
Table 5-4 Survivals, Scores and Ranks of siRNAs targeting genes previously associated with the TRAIL pathway in the screen of the druggable genome.....	163
Table 5-5 Re-screen of siRNAs targeting genes targeted by the top 20 siRNAs from the druggable genome screen.....	167
Table 5-6 Summary of confirmation experiments and categorisation of candidate hit genes. KD: Knock-down.....	170
Table 5-7 Summary of effects of transfection of siRNAs from potential hits on TRAIL-induced caspase activity.....	173
Table 5-8 Repeated seed sequences from druggable genome screen results.....	177
Table 5-9 Seed sequences enriched in high scoring siRNAs	179

Table 5-10 Genes associated with the TRAIL pathway with 3' UTR matches to “hit” seeds	184
Table 5-11 Percentage of screen seeds found in the 3' UTR TRAIL genes.....	185
Table 5-12 Top 20 3' UTRs containing matches to “hit” seed sequences	189
Table 5-13 Top 20 3' UTRs containing matches to “hit” seed sequences found in two or more confirmed siRNAs.....	190
Table 5-14 Top 20 3' UTRs containing matches to “enriched” seed sequences.....	191
Table 5-15 “Hit” and “enriched” seed sequences also found in natural human miRNAs ...	193
Table 6-1 Top scoring clones from chromosome 22 ORF over-expression screen.....	218
Table 7-1 Performance of siRNAs targeting hits from Ovcharenko <i>et al</i> screen in screens performed here.....	243

Abbreviations

5-FU	5-Fluorouracil
6mer	Hexamer
7mer-A1	Heptamer matching bases 2-7 of a mature miRNA with an additional A at position 1
7mer-m8	Heptamer matching bases 2-8 of a mature miRNA
8mer	Octamer
ADP	Adenosine DiPhosphate
ATP	Adenosine TriPhosphate
bp	Base Pair(s)
BSA	Bovine Serum Albumin
Casp8	Caspase-8
cDNA	Complementary DNA
cFLIP	Cellular FLICE Inhibitory Protein (also known as CFLAR)
CMV	CytoMegaloVirus
CNS	Central Nervous System
CNS-DCs	Central Nervous System DCs
COSMIC	Catalogue Of Somatic Mutations In Cancer
DAPI	4',6-DiAmidino-2-PhenylIndole
DcR1	Decoy Receptor 1 (also known as TNFRSF10C or TRAIL-R3)
DcR2	Decoy Receptor 2 (also known as TNFRSF10D or TRAIL-R4)
DCs	Dendritic Cells
DISC	Death Inducing Signalling Complex
DNA	Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid
DR4	Death Receptor 4 (also known as TNFRSF10A or TRAIL-R1)
DR5	Death Receptor 5 (also known as TNFRSF10B or TRAIL-R2)
dsRBP	Double Strand RNA Binding Protein
dsRNA	Double-Stranded RNA
EDTA	EthyleneDiamineTetra-acetic Acid
EMCV	EncephaloMyoCarditis Virus
esiRNA	endoribonuclease-prepared siRNA
EST	Expressed Sequence Tag

FACS	Fluorescent Activated Cell Sorting
FADD	FAS Associated Death Domain protein
FBS	Fetal Bovine Serum
FDR	False Discovery Rate
FITC	Fluorescein IsoThioCyanate
Flp/FRT	FLiPase/Flipase Recombination Target
FWER	FamilyWise Error Rate
GDP	Guanosine DiPhosphate
GFP	Green Fluorescent Protein
GNF	Genomics Institute of the Novartis Research Foundation
GO	Gene Ontology
GSEA	Gene Set Enrichment Analysis
GTP	Guanosine TriPosphate
H ₂ O	Water
H ₂ O ₂	Hydrogen Peroxide
IL-2	Interleukin-2
kb	KiloBase
LB	Luria-Bertani Broth
Log	Logarithm
LTR	Long Terminal Repeat
MAD	Median Absolute Deviation
MAPK	Mitogen Activated Protein Kinase
miRNA	MIcro RNA
mRNA	Messenger RNA
NF- κ B	Nuclear Factor-kappa B
NK (cells)	Natural Killer (cells)
NoT	Not Transfected
NPI	Normalised Percentage Inhibition
nt	NucleoTide
Oligo	Oligonucleotide
ORF	Open Reading Frame
ORFeome	The totality of all ORFs in an organism
PBS	Phosphate Buffered Saline
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction

PGK	PhosphoGlycerate Kinase
PKC	Protein Kinase C
pSM2	pSHAG-MAGIC2
PTGS	Post Transcriptional Gene Silencing
qPCR	Quantitative PCR
qRT-PCR	Quantitative Reverse Transcription PCR
RdRP	RNA Dependent RNA Polymerase
Rep 1	Replicate 1
Rep 2	Replicate 2
RISC	RNA-Induced Silencing Complex
RLC	RISC Loading Complex
RLU	Relative Luminescent Units
RNA	Ribose Nucleic Acid
RNAi	RNA Interference
rpm	Revolutions Per Minute
RT-PCR	Reverse Transcription PCR
SCF	Skp, Cullin, F-box
shRNA	Short Hairpin RNA
shRNA ^{mir}	Short hairpin RNA with micro RNA based design
siRNA	Small Interfering RNA
ssRNA	Single-Stranded RNA
TNF	Tumor Necrosis Factor
TRAIL	TNF-Related Apoptosis Inducing Factor
UTR	UnTranslated Region
UV	UltraViolet (radiation)
cAMP	Cyclic adenosine monophosphate
cGMP	Cyclic guanosine monophosphate