Genetics: A Handbook for Lawyers was first published in 2009. My goal in writing that book was to provide an overview of the field of genetics targeted to the legal community. This book is written much for the same purpose.

Why an expanded book on this topic? Since I first began drafting the prior manuscript, eight years have passed. Eight years in genetics is a lifetime for a field that can be traced back to the work of an Augustinian monk, published in 1866. This book is written to provide a concise overview of the key concepts of genetics that have been discovered over the last 150 years.

The impetus for this, and the prior publication, is a murder case involving early DNA evidence. The case is not O.J., but instead a case that gathered no national attention. It occurred many years ago, and the defense included a very respected young attorney. The defendant was indigent and the firm was appointed by the court.

The inquisitive young attorney decided to learn genetics to help him understand some science behind the case. Unfortunately, at that time, there were no books that provided a good summary of relevant key points of genetics that could provide this education. Thus, the young attorney was forced to the textbooks, where most genetic texts were written for graduate students who were learning the field through the scientific literature and their own thesis advisors.

This book is meant for that young attorney and all other attorneys interested in learning about the science of genetics. Where possible, further reading is included with citations to the scientific literature at the end of each chapter. Some references will be to books for more in-depth reading; others will be to review articles that provide a more definitive discussion of a specific topic.

This book is not a “sequel” to my original work. It is an expanded version updated to reflect the major advances in the field. Although some parts may be excised and modified, there are only so many ways to explain the earliest fundamentals in the field. Again, like contract law, in order to understand the basics, such as damages, every 1L learns the case of Hawkins v. McGee.
Additionally, with a vast selection of images available with appropriate copyrights for use in this book, it has been possible to provide such figures as a way to assist in understanding the material.

My goal is take you on an incredible journey into life! I hope you enjoy.