A protein-domain microarray identifies novel protein–protein interactions

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Protein domains mediate protein–protein interactions through binding to short peptide motifs in their corresponding ligands. These peptide recognition modules are critical for the assembly of multiprotein complexes. We have arrayed glutathione S-transferase (GST) fusion proteins, with a focus on protein interaction domains, on to nitrocellulose-coated glass slides to generate a protein-domain chip. Arrayed protein-interacting modules included WW (a domain with two conserved tryptophans), SH3 (Src homology 3), SH2, 14.3.3, FHA (forkhead-associated), PDZ (a domain originally identified in PSD-95, DLG and ZO-1 proteins), PH (pleckstrin homology) and FF (a domain with two conserved phenylalanines) domains. Here we demonstrate, using peptides, that the arrayed domains retain their binding integrity. Furthermore, we show that the protein-domain chip can ‘fish’ proteins out of a total cell lysate; these

domain-bound proteins can then be detected on the chip with a specific antibody, thus producing an interaction map for a cellular protein of interest. Using this approach we have confirmed the domain-binding profile of the signalling molecule Sam68 (Src-associated during mitosis 68), and have identified a new binding profile for the core small nuclear ribonucleoprotein Smb'. This protein-domain chip not only identifies potential binding partners for proteins, but also promises to recognize qualitative differences in protein ligands (caused by post-translational modification), thus getting at the heart of signal transduction pathways.

Key words: arginine methylation, proline-rich motifs, Sam68, signalling, Smb'.

INTRODUCTION

As we pass from the genomic to the proteomic era, it is becoming necessary and possible to complement existing techniques of gene expression profiling with chip-size protein microarrays. The development of protein microarrays is in its infancy and, as with all emerging technologies, there are different approaches being taken to generate such arrays. Initial studies arrayed cDNA expression libraries on PVDF membranes [1]. This approach has been successful in identifying protein binding partners and enzyme substrates [2,3]. Recent studies have paved the way for the rapid development of high-density protein arrays on glass slides by establishing the concentration of protein needed, identifying surfaces for protein immobilization, and demonstrating that fluorophore-tagged proteins can be used effectively to trace and compare protein–protein interactions [4–6]. MacBeath and Schreiber [5] arrayed proteins on aldehyde slides that were probed with fluorophore-tagged proteins to identify protein–protein interactions. A single specific interaction was detected in a field of 10000 spots. Using a synthetic ligand for FKBP12 (FK506-binding protein 12), this microarray format was also used to demonstrate the feasibility of identifying protein–small-molecule interactions. The group led by Pat Brown has also made inroads into the protein microarray field [7], using poly(L-lysine) slides. Their study focused on the arraying of antibody/antigen pairs. Two different fluorophore-tagged protein solutions were used as probes to assay for the relative specificity and abundance of proteins at physiologically relevant concentrations. Recently,

nickel-coated slides were used to array glutathione S-transferase (GST)/His₆-tagged yeast proteins [4]. In that study, 5800 yeast open reading frames were arrayed, and new phospholipid- and calmodulin-interacting proteins were identified. A different approach was taken by Ziauddin and Sabatini [6], who printed cDNA expression vectors on glass slides and then cultured mammalian cells on the arrayed slide. This resulted in small areas of transfection and protein expression where the cDNA was arrayed. This technique has been termed ‘transfected cell microarrays’, and has successfully identified gene products that alter cellular physiology.

The stimulation of cells from outside triggers cascades of signal transduction that result in cellular responses such as growth, differentiation and movement. These signals are transduced by networks of interacting proteins [8]. As a result of the enormous body of data gathered in recent years regarding protein–protein interactions, it has become clear that a large proportion of protein interactions occur between a domain in one protein and a small motif (usually 8–15 amino acids) in its ligand [9,10]. These diverse associations are mediated through interactions of a limited number of modular signalling units or protein domains. Protein-interacting domains are classified in the protein family (Pfam) database (<http://pfam.wustl.edu/>). Protein interactions involving domains are often regulated by post-translational modification (phosphorylation, methylation and acetylation) of the smaller protein motif. The phosphorylation of proteins on serine and threonine residues can regulate 14.3.3, forkhead-associated (FHA) and WD40 (conserved

Abbreviations used: FF domain, a domain with two conserved phenylalanines (F); FHA, forkhead-associated; GST, glutathione S-transferase; KH, ribonucleoprotein K homology; PBST, PBS containing 0.1 % Tween 20; PDZ domain, a domain originally identified in PSD-95, DLG and ZO-1 proteins; PGM, proline/glycine/methionine; PH, pleckstrin homology; PTB, phosphotyrosine-binding; Sam68, Src-associated during mitosis 68; SH3, Src homology 3; SH2, Src homology 2; WBP, WW-domain-binding protein; WW domain, a domain with two conserved tryptophans (W).

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sequence of 40 amino acids that ends in Trp-Asp) domain binding [11], and the phosphorylation of proteins on tyrosine residues can regulate Src homology 2 (SH2) and phosphotyrosine-binding (PTB) domain binding [12]. In addition, lysine acetylation [13], and lysine and arginine methylation [14–17], have also been implicated in the regulation of protein–protein interactions.

Here we use characterized modular protein domains to generate a chip that can be used to screen for protein interactions. Included in the protein domain array are WW (a domain with two conserved tryptophans) [18,19], SH3 [20], SH2 [9], 14.3.3 [21], FHA [11,22], PDZ (a domain originally identified in PSD-95, DLG and ZO-1 proteins) [23], pleckstrin homology (PH) [24] and FF (a domain with two conserved phenylalanines) [25] domains. In order to define the parameters of this approach we have focused our attention on the WW- and SH3-domain region of this array. These domains (WW and SH3) bind proline-rich ligands. The signalling molecule Sam68 (Src-associated during mitosis 68) and the core small nuclear ribonucleoprotein SmB' are two such proline-rich molecules. Sam68 interacts with SH3 and WW-domain-containing proteins [16], and SmB' associates with the WW domains of the spliceosome-associated protein formin-binding protein ('FBP') 21 [26]. Using peptides derived from these proteins and specific antibodies, we have been able to demonstrate distinct and reproducible binding to subsets of protein domains, thus generating domain-binding profiles for cellular proteins.

EXPERIMENTAL

Purification of GST fusion proteins

GST fusion proteins were overexpressed in *Escherichia coli* DH5 α cells (Life Technologies, Rockville, MD, U.S.A.) by induction with a final concentration of 0.4 mM isopropyl β -D-thiogalactopyranoside. Cells were broken by sonication. The resulting lysates were centrifuged at 12000 *g* for 10 min, and the GST fusion proteins were then batch-purified from extracts by binding to glutathione–Sephacrose 4B beads (Amersham Pharmacia Biotech, Piscataway, NJ, U.S.A.) and washed in PBS according to the manufacturer's instructions. The purified proteins were eluted from the beads with 30 mM glutathione, 50 mM Tris/HCl, pH 7.5, and 120 mM NaCl. The purified proteins were stored in the elution buffer at -70°C in 384-well plates.

Production of protein microarrays

The proteins were arrayed in duplicate using a FLEXYS[®] robot (Genomic Solutions, Ann Arbor, MI, U.S.A.). We used a high-density arrayer (HAD) 48 Pin Head (FLX 12021) for arraying. The GST fusion proteins were arrayed from a 384-well plate which contained 10 μl of each protein at a concentration of 1 $\mu\text{g}/\mu\text{l}$. The protein stocks were in elution buffer (no glycerol was added), and each protein was arrayed five times on to the same spot to increase the local concentration of protein. Proteins were spotted on to a glass slide precoated with nitrocellulose polymer (FAST[™] Slide; Schleicher & Schuell, Keene, NH, U.S.A.) to generate a rectangular array (3.1 cm $\times$ 2 cm). The arrayed proteins were air-dried. The protein chip is composed of 20 grids each, in a 5 row $\times$ 5 column format, with a distance of 700 μm between spots. Each grid thus contains 12 fusion proteins arrayed in duplicate, with GST alone spotted in the middle of the grid. A 384-well master plate containing 10 μl of each protein (1 $\mu\text{g}/\mu\text{l}$) was sufficient for arraying 35–40 slides. Thus each spot contains approx. 250 ng of fusion protein.

Probing the protein-domain array with a labelled peptide or proteome

Peptide probes

Peptides were synthesized by the W. M. Keck Biotechnology Resource Center (New Haven, CT, U.S.A.). Biotinylated peptides (10 μg) were pre-bound to 5 μl of Cy3–streptavidin or Cy5–streptavidin (Fluorolink[™]; Amersham Pharmacia Biotech) in 500 μl of PBST (PBS containing 0.1 % Tween 20). The fluorescently labelled peptide was then incubated with 20 μl of biotin–agarose beads (Sigma, St. Louis, MO, U.S.A.) to remove the free streptavidin label. Arrayed slides were blocked in PBST containing 3 % (w/v) powdered milk, followed by the addition of 400 μl of fluorophore-tagged peptide. Blocking and hybridization were performed in an Atlas Glass Hybridization Chamber (Clontech, Palo Alto, CA, U.S.A.). After 1 h of incubation at room temperature, the unbound peptide was washed away with PBST, three times for 10 min each.

Proteome probes

Human MCF7 cells were grown to 80 % confluency. Cells were then scraped into a mild lysis buffer [PBS, pH 7.2, containing 100 mM NaCl and Complete[™] protease inhibitor cocktail (Roche, Indianapolis, IN, U.S.A.)]. Cells were subsequently broken by two 30 s sonicator pulses. The array was first blocked in PBST/3 % (w/v) powdered milk and then incubated for 1 h with 2 mg/ml MCF7 cell lysate. The array was washed for 3 $\times$ 10 min in PBST. Bound protein was then detected by probing for 1 h with a primary antibody to the protein of interest, working at a dilution used for Western blot analysis (1:1000). The array was washed for 3 $\times$ 10 min in PBST. The primary antibody was recognized with an appropriate FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. All incubations were performed at room temperature. The anti-peptide antibody against Sam68 has been described previously [27]. The anti-SmB' antibody, Ana128, was obtained from ICN Biomedicals (Costa Mesa, CA, U.S.A.). When performing endogenous protein profiling, it is important that the primary antibody is raised against a peptide and not against a GST fusion protein, as this would result in cross-reactivity with the arrayed proteins.

Probe detection

Following the washes, the slides were centrifuged dry and the fluorescent signal was detected using a GeneTAC[™] LSIV scanner (Genomic Solutions). A 550 nm long pass filter was used for the detection of Cy3-labelled probes and FITC-conjugated secondary antibodies. A 675 nm band pass filter was used for the detection of Cy5-labelled probes. A positive signal is seen as two dots at varying angles.

RESULTS

Generation of protein-domain microarrays

We have generated and gathered, from fellow researchers, GST expression vectors harbouring protein domains as well as proteins of general interest. A list of 212 constructs is shown in Figure 1, from which we generated GST fusion proteins for our master plate. A total of 145 protein domains are represented, broken down as follows: 33 WW, 23 SH3, 17 SH2, 23 PH, 23 PDZ, seven 14.3.3, five PTB, four FHA, eight FF and two ribonucleoprotein K homology (KH). An additional 67 GST fusion proteins without canonical protein domains are listed in the 'Other' section. We have arrayed this set of GST fusion proteins in

WW A1 FBP11A (f) A2 FBP11 (f) A3 NEBD4(f) A4 FBP30AB (f) A5 FBP30A (f) A6 HYPIC (f) A7 YAP (f) A8 FBP28(f) A9 PDGFR Short(f) A10 FBP21(f) A11 PDGFR Long(f) A12 FBP11B(f)	WW B1 WWOX2(f) B2 WWOX1(f) B3 ESS I(q) B4 Ca150 WWI (a) B5 Pln 1(f) B6 YJQ8(q) B7 Ca150 WW2(a) B8 Itck B(f) B9 RSP II(q) B10 Itck A(f) B11 RSP I(q) B12 WWOX 1&2(f)	WW C1 SMN4(q) C2 C3 HYAP-WW1mutant(q) C4 HYAP-WW2(q) C5 Fe65 w.t.(q) C6 HYAP WW1 w.t.(q) C7 YAP chicken(q) C8 Fe65 WW mutant(q) C9 C10 DYS WW(q) C11 C12 DYS WW mutant(q)	SH3 D1 Src(f) D2 p85(f) D3 Vav c-term(o) D4 Yrk(q) D5 PRMT2(f) D6 Vav n-term(o) D7 Us.yes(q) D8 Yes(f) D9 G-ick SH3/SH2(o) D10 Abl(f) D11 Vav F.L. SH3/SH2(o) D12 Fyn-1(f)	SH3 E1 p120 ras Gap(o) E2 Fyn-3 SH3/SH2(o) E3 Grb2 c-term(o) E4 Nck(o) E5 Spectrin(o) E6 E7 Abl(o) E8 SLAP SH3/SH2(o) E9 Ras GAP(o) E10 Fyn-2(o) E11 PLC(o) E12 PLC gamma(o)	SH2 F1 Shc (f) F2 Src (f) F3 Shc (o) F4 G-ick SH3/SH2(o) F5 Vav F.L. SH3/SH2(o) F6 Grb2(o) F7 p59 fyn SH3/SH2(o) F8 Vav SH2-GST(o) F9 PI3K c-term(o) F10 PI3K(f) F11 Lck(o) F12 Yes(f)
SH2 G1 PLC SH2/SH2(o) G2 PI3K n-term(o) G3 G4 G5 G6 G7 G8F Fyn(o) G9 G10 Abl(o) G11 G12 SLAP SH3/SH2(o)	PH H1 Dynamin-2(n) H2 Dynamin-1(n) H3 Akt(n) H4 Spectrin(n) H5 KIAA 0053(n) H6 PLC gamma(n) H7 Pleckstrin(n) H8 PLC delta(n) H9 DAGK delta(n) H10 DAPP1(n) H11 Beta ARK-1(n) H12 Grp-1 (n)	PH I1 hSos(n) I2 Ras GAP(n) I3 PLC (209-572)(b) I4 PLC (5-180)(b) I5 PLC (5-295)(b) I6 PLC (570-848)(b) I7 PLC (5-150)(b) I8 PLC (849-1234)(b) I9 I10 Itk(n) I11 PLC (5-208)(b) I12 PLC Beta3(n)	14.3.3 J1 14.3.3 Zeta(f) J2 14.3.3 Beta(f) J3 J4 14.3.3 Eta(f) J5 14.3.3 Epsilon(e) J6 J7 J8 14.3.3 Gamma(e) J9 J10 14.3.3 Tau(f) J11 J12 14.3.3Sigma(e)	PDZ K1 NHERF PDZ2(e) K2 NHERF PDZ1(e) K3 Alfa-syn(m) K4 Gamma-syn(m) K5 Densin PDZ2(i) K6 GST PDZ3(i) K7 Beta-syn(m) K8 AF6 PDZ1(i) K9 NHERF2(g) K10 SAP 97 3x PDZ(f) K11 NHERF1(g) K12 SAP 97 F.L.(f)	PDZ L1 PDZ CAP1(g) L2 PDZ3 CAP1(g) L3 PDZ8 (z) L4 PDZ9 (z) L5 PDZ10 (z) L6 PDZ 11/12 (z) L7 PDZ 12 (z) L8 PDZ 13 (z) L9 KIT (z) L10 KIT delta 976 (z) L11 L12 PDZ CAP2(g)
FHA/PTB/KH M1 RAD 53 FHA2(e) M2 RAD 53 FHA1(e) M3 PTB2 FE 65 L2(s) M4 PTB1 FE 65(s) M5 PTB DAB2(k) M6 QKI KH(o) M7 PTB2 FE 65(s) M8 PTB DAB1(k) M9 M10 KI FHA (1-168)(r) M11 SAM 68 KH(o) M12 CHN2 FHA(e)	FF N1 FBP 11(1)(f) N2 CA 150 (1-3)(f) N3 CA 150 (4-6)(f) N4 FBP 11 (3-4) (f) N5 PRP (1-2)(f) N6 N7 p190B(3-4)(f) N8 p190B(1-2)(f) N9 p190B(1-4)(f) N10 N11 N12	OTHER W1 GST-CTD(w) W2 Cox2(f) W3 MRE11 c-term (f) W4 TARPP c-term (f) W5 TARPP F.L. (f) W6 FKHL m(x) W7 FKHL m(x) W8 FKHL N-term(x) W9 hDM2 (f) W10 hER alfa(x) W11 Tubby c-term (z) W12 Tulp3 c-term (z)	OTHER X1 HDAC1 (v) X2 HDAC2 (v) X3 HDAC3 (v) X4 HDAC4c1 (u) X5 HDAC4C6 (u) X6 HDAC5R4 (u) X7 HDAC1 (t) X8 HDAC2 (t) X9 HDAC3 (t) X10 HDAC10 (f) X11 X12	OTHER Y1 PRMT1 (f) Y2 PRMT2 (f) Y3 PRMT3 (f) Y4 CARM (f) Y5 PRMT6 (f) Y6 PABP F.L.(f) Y7 PABP hind III(f) Y8 PABP c-term (f) Y9 PABP w.t.(f) Y10 PABP R-1 (f) Y11 PABP R-1.2 (f) Y12	OTHER Z1 EHR(f) Z2 EH(f) Z3 Xiap (124-240)(p) Z4 GAR(f) Z5 SMN(f) Z6 BARDI 13-638(d) Z7 Histone 3(f) Z8 EVL(f) Z9 HPI B.F.L.(j) Z10 MENA(f) Z11 BARDI 13-777(d) Z12 Profilin(f)
OTHER AA1 p53 F.L.(q) AA2 U1A(f) AA3 AA4 DP-1(c) AA5 p73 beta(h) AA6 p53 BP-2(q) AA7 E2F4(c) AA8 p73 alfa(h) AA9 p53 BP-2mt2(q) AA10 E2F1(c) AA11 p53 BP-2mt1(q) AA12 p53 W.T(h)	OTHER AB1 WBP 11-5'(f) AB2 SRPK 2-5'(f) AB3 Id 28(f) AB4 Id 10(f) AB5 Sap 62 3x motif(f) AB6 B dystroglican(f) AB7 3 BP(f) AB8 11 PGM(f) AB9 SMB Full(f) AB10 SmB'(f) AB11 U1C(f) AB12 WBP 11-3'(f)	VECTOR SOURCE: a- Gracia Blanco, Mariano. b- Snyderman, Ralph. c- Johnson, David. d- Manley, James. e- Yaffe, Michael B. f- Bedford, Mark. g- Biber, Jürg. h- Blandino, Giovanni. i- Borg, Jean-Paul. j- Kouzarides, Tony. k- Cooper, Jonathan A. l- Dobrosotskaya, Irina. m- Gee, Stephen. n- Lemmon, Mark A. o- Richard, Stéphane. p- Shi, Yigong. q- Sudol, Marius. r- Takagi, Masatoshi. s- Zambrano, Nicola. t- Chang, Kun-Sang. u- Jianrong, Lu. v- Yang, Wen-Ming. w- Dynan, William. x- Hu, Mickey. y- Shapiro, Lawrence. z- Mancini, Annalisa			

Figure 1 List of 212 proteins, protein domains and protein motifs that have been purified as GST fusion proteins and arrayed on nitrocellulose-coated slides

The upper panel shows the design of the array. Slides (right) feature a 5 × 5 grid pattern. Proteins are arrayed in duplicate, and each block harbours 12 different fusion proteins. The middle position (M) contains GST alone as a negative marker and background indicator. The lower panel lists all the arrayed fusion proteins and their position on the slide. The domain type is indicated at the top of each box (WW, SH3, SH2, PH, 14.3.3, PDZ, FHA/PTB/KH and FF). 'Other' refers to GST fusion proteins that do not contain domains but are of general interest. Workers that have contributed to this array are listed.

duplicate on to the nitrocellulose film of FAST™ Slides, using a robot. Each spot contained approx. 250 ng of fusion protein. The arrayed proteins were allowed to dry on the nitrocellulose surface and the slide was subsequently stored at 4 °C.

Peptide motifs bind specifically to immobilized protein domains

To test the integrity of the arrayed domains, we synthesized biotinylated peptides that are known to bind specifically to certain protein domains. These peptides were conjugated to streptavidin–Cy3 and then used to probe the protein-domain array. The peptides used included the proline-rich P3 motif of Sam68 (which binds SH3 and WW domains [16]) (Figure 2F), the proline/glycine/methionine (PGM) motif of the splicing factor SmB' (which binds group III WW domains [26]) (Figure 2B), the PPYP motif of WBP1 (WW-domain-binding protein 1, which binds group I WW domains [18]) (Figure 2D) and the C-terminus of Kv1.4 (which binds a subset of PDZ domains [28]) (Figure 2C). Unique binding profiles were detected for each of these peptides in the predicted regions of the array, demonstrating that these arrayed domains are functional and that their binding specificity is intact.

Post-translational modification of a peptide changes the binding profile

Post-translational modifications are key events associated with the initiation or the redirection of signalling pathways. We focused on arginine methylation to assess the ability of the array to distinguish between unmodified and modified peptides. We used the P3 motif of Sam68, which we have shown to display reduced binding to SH3 but not WW domains when arginine-methylated [16]. The unmethylated peptides were conjugated to streptavidin–Cy3 and the methylated peptides were conjugated to streptavidin–Cy5. A mixture of the labelled peptides was then used to probe a single protein-domain array. The unmethylated P3 peptide (Figure 2F) bound two WW domains and six SH3 domains. The methylated P3 peptide (Figure 2G) bound the same two WW domains, but only three SH3 domains. The SH3 domains that are sensitive to arginine methylation are most obvious when both the Cy3 and Cy5 signals are read simultaneously. Domains that bind the P3 motif regardless of its methylation state are shown in yellow, whereas those domains that are sensitive to methylation are shown in green (Figure 2H). A similar approach can be taken to screen for phosphorylation-regulated protein–protein interactions.

Detection of the binding profiles of individual proteins from a total-cell lysate

Next we attempted to determine the binding profiles of endogenous proteins. To do this we established an ELISA-based method. First, a total-cell lysate from MCF7 cells was used to probe a protein-domain array. The array was then washed with PBST and re-probed with an antibody raised against a protein of interest. Finally, the primary antibody was detected with a FITC-labelled secondary antibody. We chose to look at the binding profiles of two endogenous proteins, Sam68 and SmB'. We have obtained distinct binding profiles for these two proteins using short peptides (Figures 2B and 2F) that represent just a fraction of their entire length (Figure 3B). Previous studies had identified the P3 [16,29] and PGM [26] motifs as the dominant protein-interacting regions within Sam68 and SmB' respectively. We thus reasoned that the binding profile of the peptide should be indicative of how the full-length protein would bind to the

Figure 2 GST fusion proteins containing protein-interacting domains retain their binding specificity in a microarrayed format

GST fusion proteins (212 in total) were arrayed in duplicate on to a nitrocellulose slide. (A) The array was probed with an anti-GST primary antibody and detected with a FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. (B) The array was probed with a Cy3-labelled SmB' peptide (biotin–PPGMRPPPPGMRGPPPPGMRPPRP). (C) The array was probed with a Cy3-labelled PDZ ligand peptide from Kv1.4 (biotin–SGSGSNKAVETDV–CO₂H). (D) The array was probed with a Cy3-labelled WBP1 peptide (biotin–SGSGGTPPPPYTVG). (E) Key to the arrayed domains. The identity of the interacting domains can be extrapolated from Figure 1. In (F)–(H), the same protein array was probed with a Cy3-labelled P3 peptide of Sam68 (biotin–GVSVRGRGAAPPP–PVPRGRGVGP) and with a Cy5-labelled P3 arginine-methylated peptide of Sam68 (biotin–GVSVR*GR*GAAPPPPVPR*GR*GVGP; asterisks denote asymmetrically dimethylated arginine residues). (F) Detection of Cy3 signal; (G) detection of Cy5 signal; (H) Cy3 and Cy5 signals are superimposed. The yellow signal indicates protein interactions that are insensitive to arginine methylation, and the green signals mark protein interactions that are sensitive to arginine methylation (see inset). (I) Diagrammatic representation of the signals seen in (A)–(H). A single dot indicates a signal of low intensity, a double dot indicates a signal of high intensity, and a single asterisk denotes a GST fusion protein that contains both SH3 and SH2 domains.

domain array, with perhaps a slightly broader binding spectrum for the endogenous protein, as it may harbour additional interacting motifs.

Using this ELISA approach, we obtained distinct signals with antibodies to Sam68 and SmB' (Figures 3A and 3C). Both of these molecules are proline-rich, and as such bind SH3 and WW domains. The proline-rich sequences of Sam68 and SmB' are different (Figure 3B) and they display binding profiles that are distinct, with some overlap. The SH3 and WW domain regions of the probed arrays were enlarged and compared. The patterns

Figure 3 The protein-domain array detects endogenous protein binding profiles

(A) Top panel: the array was probed with an anti-GST primary antibody (α GST) and detected with a FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. Second panel: the array was probed with an antibody to Sam68 and detected with a FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. Third panel: the array was first incubated with 2 mg/ml MCF7 cell lysate, and then probed with an antibody to Sam68, followed with a FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. Bottom panel: the array was first incubated with 2 mg/ml MCF7 cell lysate, and then probed with an antibody to SmB' (Ana128), followed with a FITC-conjugated secondary antibody. The circled signals represent non-specific interactions detected by the Sam68 primary antibody. No non-specific binding was detected with the Ana128 antibody. (B) Schematic representation of Sam68 and SmB', and positions of the biotinylated peptides used as probes. (C) Alignment of the WW- and SH3-domain section of arrays probed with a total cell lysate, followed by a specific antibody (anti-Sam68 or Ana128), compared with the binding seen with a nested peptide from these two proteins (see Figures 2B and 2F). (D) Diagrammatic representation of the signals seen in (C). A single dot indicates a signal of low intensity, a double dot indicates a signal of high intensity, a single asterisk denotes a GST fusion protein that contains both SH3 and SH2 domains, and a double asterisk marks background signals generated by cross-reactivity of the primary antibody.

of binding observed for the cellular proteins were very similar to those seen with the respective peptides (Figures 3C and 3D). Thus binding of the synthetic peptide reflects the binding profile of the endogenous protein.

DISCUSSION

In the present paper we show that a protein-domain array can be used to detect interactions between peptides and arrayed proteins, as well as between endogenous cellular proteins and the array. Of paramount importance is the fact that this array not only will detect the binding profiles of cellular proteins, but also will identify those post-translational modifications that create or prevent protein-protein interactions. Using this protein-domain

array, we have identified the binding profiles of two proline-rich proteins, Sam68 and SmB'. Sam68 binds both SH3 and WW domains [16,29], and thus the observed binding profile was expected (Figures 3A and 3C). The propensity of the core splicing factor, SmB', for WW domain binding has been reported [26], but the degree of SH3 domain binding demonstrated by SmB' was rather unexpected. Splicing factors are localized in nuclear speckle domains *in vivo* [30], and both SmB' and WW-domain-containing proteins have been shown to co-localize with SC35 speckles [26]. Recently, two different SH3-domain-containing proteins were also shown to co-localize with speckles [31,32]. It is thus possible that SmB' forms an attachment scaffold for WW- and SH3-domain-containing spliceosome components.

Traditional methods of domain-interaction mapping rely on blot overlay experiments [20,33–35]. Using this approach, protein interactions are examined by electrophoretically separating fusion proteins containing regions of interest on denaturing SDS/PAGE gels, transferring them to nitrocellulose and incubating them with radiolabelled domain-containing fusion protein probes. Such blot overlay experiments have been used to obtain profiles of cellular tyrosine phosphorylation states using SH2 domains [36]. The protein-domain chip can be used for similar mapping and profiling experiments. This chip has the following advantages over the blot overlay approach: (1) a large number of protein domains are screened at a time; (2) conditions are mild (SDS/PAGE is not used), so proteins are more likely to be in their native conformation; (3) the screens are fast (3–4 h) once the arrays have been generated; (4) different fluorescent labels can be used to evaluate the consequence of post-translational modifications on domain binding; and (5) the ELISA-based detection of endogenous proteins is sensitive.

In summary, the protein-domain array described in the present work could be very effective when used hand-in-hand with a motif-based searching algorithm such as Scansite [37] (<http://scansite.mit.edu/>). Short linear sequence motifs that are predicted to bind domains could be identified within query proteins and verified experimentally using this type of array.

M.T.B. is supported by the Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation Scholar Award DRS-28-02 and NIEHS Center Grant ES07784. We thank all those researchers that contributed to the GST collection, as listed at the bottom of Figure 1.

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Received 4 June 2002/2 July 2002; accepted 23 July 2002

Published as BJ Immediate Publication 23 July 2002, DOI 10.1042/BJ20020860