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Nature and Nurture Debate

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The Argument Continues

Your physical features can be identified as identical to that of your parents, like your eyes from your father, and the hair color from your mother. However, your personality and talents may have come not from your father or mother. The environment where you grew up may have a lasting effect or influence on that way you talk, behave and respond to the things around you.

One of the oldest arguments in the history of psychology is the Nature vs Nurture debate. Each of these sides have good points that it's really hard to decide whether a person's development is predisposed in his DNA, or a majority of it is influenced by this life experiences and his environment. As of now, we know that both nature and nurture play important roles in human development, but we have not known yet whether we are developed majorly because of nature or due to nurture.

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Nature

The coding of genes in each cell in us humans determine the different traits that we have, more dominantly on the physical attributes like eye color, hair color, ear size, height, and other traits. However, it is still not known whether the more abstract attributes like personality,

intelligence, sexual orientation, likes and dislikes are gene-coded in our DNA, too.

One of the hottest issues against nature theory is that there may be an existing "gay gene", which explains that gays are actually born that way. Another issue is that the criminal acts, tendency to divorce and aggressive behavior causing abuse can be justified by the "behavioral genes" once the researchers have proven their existence.

On the other hand, the behavioral genes are somewhat proven to exist when we take a look at fraternal twins. When fraternal twins are reared apart, they show the same similarities in behavior and response as if they have been reared together.

Nurture

The nurture theory holds that genetic influence over abstract traits may exist; however, the environmental factors are the real origins of our behavior. This includes the use of conditioning in order to induce a new behavior to a child, or alter an unlikely behavior being shown by the child. According to John Watson, one of the strongest psychologists who propose environmental learning as a dominating side in the nature vs nurture debate, once said that he can be able to train a baby randomly chosen in a group of 12 infants, to become any type of specialist Watson wants. He stated that he could train him to be such regardless of the child's potentialities, talents and race.

Although it is true that fraternal twins raised apart have remarkable similarities in most respects, still the intervention of the environment have caused several differences in the way they behave.

In the end, we are still left with the confusing question: Are we born this way, or do we behave according to our life experiences? The nature vs nurture debate goes on and on, but still, it is a fact that we have traits that are predetermined by our genes, but we can still choose who we want to be as we travel through our lifetime.

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