

Project Einstein: Are there genes for mathematical genius?

(Summary)

Jonathon Rothberg, founder of two genetic-sequencing companies, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology physicist Max Tegmark are sequencing the genes of 400 mathematicians and theoretical physicists from around the world, with the hopes of identifying the genes that contribute to mathematical ability.

Critics believe this is a misguided enterprise. From a practical perspective, because of the small sample sizes and genetic complexity of such traits as intelligence, projects like Rothberg's are unlikely to yield any statistical significance. There are ethical objections as well, including concerns that if certain genes are found that are related to mathematical ability or intelligence in general, it could lead to selective abortion of fetuses or prospective parents choosing between embryos created through *in vitro* fertilization.

On the other hand, one expert noted, if genetic links to various behaviors and abilities can be identified, parents might get guidance to develop the particular abilities of their children.

Read the full, original story here: ["Root of maths genius sought"](#)

Additional Resources:

- ["Race/IQ: The Jason Richwine Affair,"](#) American Conservative
- "Math Ability Starts in Infancy, Study Suggests," Discovery
- ["Ethics: Taboo genetics,"](#) Nature