

## Video: When it comes to sports success, genes matter most

David Epstein, former senior writer at “Sports Illustrated,” reporter at ProPublica and author of “The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance” sits with VICE Podcast’s Reihan Salam to discuss the ways that human biological diversity impacts athletic ability, and how this understanding could affect the future of elite sports.

In the book, “The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance,” Epstein makes a case against a single gene that ensures athletic success but argues that genes do circumscribe sports potential.

Epstein’s answer to the question “Nature or nurture?” is both.

Epstein argues that we often confuse innate talent with spirit or effort. Even traits like desire may arise from DNA (see the Iditarod dogs selectively bred for enthusiastic pulling), but that does not mean they come down to any single gene. Whether it’s running faster, standing taller or jumping higher, multiple genetic pathways may lead there.

**Read the full, original book review at *The New York Times*:** [Talent lies within. But where?](#)

### **Additional Resources:**

- [2014: One step closer to genetically engineered athletes](#), Forbes
- [DNA of basketball: Generation of generation of NBA All-Stars](#), New York Times
- [The Sports Gene author debunks ‘10,000-Hour Rule’](#), Outside