

Genes trump parenting in shaping who we are

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I want you to consider the possibility that your parents did not shape you as a person. Despite how it feels, your mother and father (or whoever raised you) likely imprinted almost nothing on your personality that has persisted into adulthood. It's the type of claim that is unwise to make unless you have some compelling evidence to back it up. Even then it will elicit the ire of many. Psychologists especially get touchy about this subject. I do have evidence, though, and by the time we've strolled through the menagerie of reasons to doubt parenting effects, I think another point will also become evident: the problems with parenting research are just a symptom of a larger malady plaguing the social and health sciences. A malady that needs to be dealt with.

Based on the results of classical twin studies, it just doesn't appear that parenting — whether mom and dad are permissive or not, read to their kid or not, or whatever else — impacts development as much as we might like to think. Studies examining identical twins separated at birth and reared apart have repeatedly revealed (in shocking ways) the same thing: these individuals are remarkably similar when in fact they should be utterly different (they have completely different environments, but the same genes). Alternatively, non-biologically related adopted children (who have no genetic commonalities) raised together are utterly dissimilar to each other — despite in many cases having decades of exposure to the same parents and home environments.

Read full, original post: [Why parenting may not matter and why most social science research is probably wrong](#)