

Behavioral genetics holds answers to heritability of intelligence, and what makes us unique

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Behavioral genetics, the study of why people differ, has long been the most vilified subfield of psychology. Its signature findings—that all traits are partly heritable and that the variation that can't be attributed to genes can't be attributed to families either—are regularly denied by commentators who consider them too fatalistic.

Yet it is just these results that have escaped the replicability crisis embroiling behavioral science, in which many highly publicized findings have turned out to be flukes. Unlike the cute but ephemeral journalist bait that comes out of many psychology labs, [the findings of behavioral genetics](#) have turned out to be substantial and robust.

Indeed, [the heritability of intelligence](#) has recently been corroborated by a new method which complements the classic studies of twins and adoptees and which solves an outstanding puzzle: Where are the genes? Most of the “Gene for X” claims of the 1990s turned out to be false positives that resulted from snooping around genomes in paltry samples. The discrepancy between the robust results from classic family research and the failures of the gene-hunters is called the Mystery of the Missing Heritability.

Biologists are solving a related mystery: What is the additional factor shaping us that cannot be identified with our genes or families?

Read full, original post: [Steven Pinker on New Advances in Behavioral Genetics](#)