

Despite distrust of genetics, indigenous people express enthusiasm for epigenetics

For the last two decades, Indigenous peoples have consistently resisted genetics on local, national and international scales. Awareness of genetics as a potentially harmful science spread through Indigenous organisations in the mid 1990s after the U.S. National Institutes of Health attempted to patent a virus found in the blood of a Papua New Guinean man, and the Human Genome Diversity Project attempted to collect DNA samples from indigenous peoples....

Although genetics has transformed in the 'post-genomic' age, its reputation among Indigenous peoples continues to be strained.

...

[However,] epigenetics has struck a chord within Indigenous scholarship and Indigenous media. Compared with the fear of genetics, the embrace of epigenetics is remarkable. Indigenous scholars, writers and leaders from Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada have expressed enthusiasm for epigenetics as a biological mechanism that explains...both the effects of early life on disease risk and "inter-generational Indigenous disadvantage."

...

The perceived affinity between epigenetics and Indigenous knowledge is a welcome change from the mistrust and antagonism that has often featured in engagements between science and Indigenous peoples. But it doesn't mean that applying epigenetics to Indigenous health and social issues will necessarily lead to good science or good policy.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The Promise of Indigenous Epigenetics](#)