

## 7 misconceptions about evolutionary psychology, including the idea that behavior is genetically determined

Evolutionary approaches to psychology hold the promise of revolutionizing the field and unifying it with the biological sciences. But among both academics and the general public, a few key misconceptions impede its application to psychology and behavior.

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### Misconception 3: Evolution Implies Genetic Determinism

No matter how widespread the belief, an evolutionary approach to psychology does not imply that behavior is genetically determined. There are two ways to appreciate this point.

First, like all other life scientists, evolutionary psychologists subscribe to an [interactionist view that states that everything in the mind, body and brain is jointly co-determined by genes and environment](#).

Second, [an evolutionary perspective emphasizes the centrality of the environment](#), pointing out that it is crucial at every phase of the causal process: the initial evolution of adaptations, their development across the lifespan and their triggers in the immediate present.

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### Misconception 6: Evolutionary Psychologists Think That Everything is an Adaptation

This canard just won't die—though it is tenable only if you read [misinformed critiques rather than the actual primary literature](#) in the field.

In their published writing, [evolutionary psychologists frequently state explicitly that evolution yields three kinds of products: adaptations, byproducts and noise](#).

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