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By -David Shenk-



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With irresistibly persuasive vigor, David Shenk debunks the long-standing notion of genetic "giftedness," and presents dazzling new scientific research showing how greatness is in the reach of every individual. DNA does not make us who we are. "Forget everything you think you know about genes, talent, and intelligence," he writes. "In recent years, a mountain of scientific evidence has emerged suggesting a completely new paradigm: not talent scarcity, but latent talent abundance." Integrating cutting-edge research from a wide swath of disciplines-cognitive science, genetics, biology, child development-Shenk offers a highly optimistic new view of human potential. The problem isn't our inadequate genetic assets, but our inability, so far, to tap into what we already have. IQ testing and widespread acceptance of "innate" abilities have created an unnecessarily pessimistic view of humanity-and fostered much misdirected public policy, especially in education. The truth is much more exciting. Genes are not a "blueprint" that bless some with greatness and doom most of us to mediocrity or worse. Rather our individual destinies are a product of the complex interplay between genes and outside stimuli-a dynamic that we, as people and as parents, can influence. This is a revolutionary and optimistic message. We are not prisoners of our DNA. We all have the potential for greatness.



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