



"Love of Shopping" is Not a Gene: Problems With Darwinian Psychology

Anne Innis Dagg

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At the beginning of the 21st century, genes are used to explain almost every aspect of human life, from social inequalities to health, sexuality and criminality. Although few people have studied genetics, our culture is full of casual references to them. The Darwinian, if asked to comment on our evident 'love of shopping,' would declare it to be in our genes. As former hunters and gatherers, they would say, there is no qualitative difference between gathering fruits and shopping for food, clothes, housewares or knickknacks. One can read not only about the "shopping gene," but also about the "reading gene," the "humility gene" and the "coaching gene." Pop science, fostered by Darwinian psychology, run amok.

This book is a critique of Darwinian psychology—alias evolutionary psychology, alias sociobiology—the study of the social behavior of animals and people based on evolution. In this provocative work, Anne Innis Dagg, an eminent and outspoken critic of this ideology, first presents an overview of the theory and its popularity both among professionals and lay people, then she examines concepts of social behavior—based on "genes vs. culture"—including: aggression in the form of rape, infanticide, homicide, gang violence and war, and general criminality; homosexuality in both the human and the animal world; and race, IQ and environment.

Focusing on the problems present in much Darwinian psychological research—flawed data, faulty analysis, and political motives—this controversial book offers the first comprehensible critique of the most popular scientific theory of the late 20th century.

Anne Innis Dagg has an M.A. in Genetics and a Ph.D. in animal behavior. She is the author of numerous books, including *The Camel: Its Ecology, Behavior and Relationship with Man*, and *The Feminine Gaze: A Compendium of Nonfiction Women Authors and Their Books*. She is currently academic director of independent studies at the University of Waterloo in Ontario.

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