

However, until the information can be delivered more effectively, this sort of stopgap system will have to do.

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## Genotype-phenotype correlations with personality traits of healthcare professionals: a new use for the Human Genome Project

Lachlan Brown

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TO THE EDITOR: Fitzgerald and Isaacs' recent article on genotype-phenotype correlations in healthcare professionals describes some truly original research in an area of exceptional relevance.<sup>1</sup> However, some of their conclusions fail the analytical technique described by others as "the common sense test".<sup>2</sup>

Most obviously, the finding of complete deletion of all personality genes in orthopaedic surgeons sits uncomfortably with clinical experience, which suggests a plethora of witty and indeed charismatic members of that specialty. The authors have erred in making an admission of reading *The Medical Journal of Australia* on at least a semi-regular basis as an inclusion criterion for the study. As this would include only a minuscule proportion of the orthopaedic population, their sampling was surely unrepresentative.

By the same criterion, it is likely that there are few theatre sisters who would

admit to being semi-regular readers of the Journal. Those who do are probably married to members of the medical profession, which would explain the (*bel*) indifference phenotype.

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### Dominic A Fitzgerald,\* David Isaacs†

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IN REPLY: We welcome Brown's observations. However, with regard to orthopaedic surgeons, we are unaware of any correlation between affability and ability. □

### C Ross Philpot

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TO THE EDITOR: I was impressed by the article on the seven deadly genes in a recent issue of the Journal.<sup>1</sup>

Your readers may also be interested to learn that we have recently discovered an entire family of antisocial recessive genes in colleagues and patients.<sup>2</sup> These include the *stalk-r* gene (not only in patients who stalk doctors, but also in doctors who molest their patients<sup>3</sup>) and the *hum-r* gene for socially inappropriate comicality, which clearly invites correlation with the *dub* (formerly *cyn*) gene for cynicism and medical humour.<sup>1</sup>

I cordially wish Fitzgerald and Isaacs the Best of British (and Irish) luck with the lofty ambitions expressed in the penultimate paragraph of their discussion; and, together with Arthur Koestler, we speculate that "in lieu of abolishing language the only way to curb human destructiveness would be to re-tool the brain", and that "advances in genetic engineering might encourage evolution along its path".<sup>4</sup>

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