

Philosophy 3334 Fall 2023  
Reading questions #13  
Due Thu, Nov 9

1) Read Harden chapter 6. Endnote 11 will also be helpful (in general you should always read them). Harden gives several reasons why heritability estimates from twin studies might not actually reflect the true value of heritability of a trait in a population. Here are things that matter:

1) How similar the environments of identical twins raised together are relative to how similar the environments of fraternal twins raised together are.

2) How similar the environments of identical twins raised apart are (adoption) vs. two random individuals in the population.

3) How genetically similar fraternal siblings are.

For each of these three cases, describe what researchers typically assume in order to do their study, describe why this might be wrong, and say whether if their assumptions are wrong whether this means that the true value of heritability is actually higher or lower.

NOTE: It should really help you to look back at Sober's "Separating Nature and Nurture." He carefully goes through what the mathematical assumptions in twin studies are and even puts asterisks by the controversial assumptions in the derivation.

2) After reading the chapter, come up with a question that you want answered or a topic that you would like to be discussed. This could be something that the chapters forced you think about or it could be something that you thought was particularly confusing in the chapters.