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The True Nature of Attention Deficit Disorder

Attention Deficit Disorder, commonly known as ADD is not a genetic disorder, but rather a genetic evolution. This is clearly indicated by Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest and natural selection. This will be proven through Darwinian as well as indicating social and psychological impacts according to such works as the Origin of the Species and Social Darwinism in American Thought. ADD has long been a misunderstood and controversial phenomena. The cause of this development and the impact of Ritalin on the school environment is still hotly debated in both the public and scientific community. The simplest explanation for the recent rise in children with ADD is actually a gift. ADD leads to an increase in overall brain activity. If correctly tapped, this could open the doors to a new breed of more intelligent humans.

Over the past two decades, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of individuals diagnosed with ADD. At this point, as many as one in twenty children has Attention Deficit Disorder. ("Harvard Mental Health" 2) In addition, while the larger part of the cause of ADD is unknown, one thing that is clearly indicated is the hereditary nature of ADD. Identical twins have a ninety percent chance of both having ADD and children of an ADD parent have a fifty percent chance of having the disorder. ("Harvard Mental Health" 2) Simple Darwinian theory on natural selection would easily prevent a hereditary disorder from reaching such a high level in such a short period of time.

According to Darwin's theories, such a disorder should have wiped itself out before spreading into the gene pool.

Darwin's theory of natural selection states that evolution occurs because of genetic mutations that occur naturally. In most cases, mutations have a harmful effect on an organism. An organism or person with less desirable mutations or disorders is less likely to have offspring and therefore less likely to pass on the defect. On the other hand, when a mutation occurs that benefits an organism, that organism is able to better survive and is more likely to pass on the beneficial change. Because ADD is a hereditary trait, it should have been eliminated if it was a defect. Since ADD has not been eliminated by natural selection, it can only be assumed that it must actually be beneficial to the individual.

Attention Deficit Disorder is currently classified as a disorder that results in one or more of three basic symptoms; hyperactivity, impulsiveness, and inattentiveness. ("Harvard Mental Health" 1) The effects of ADD are most prevalent in childhood. Most children with ADD can't wait there turn, talk too fast, too much, and too loud, are accident prone, and abandon projects that they start or switch haphazardly between projects. As an ADD individual moves into adolescence, they tend to neglect homework, frequently don't live up to talents that they display, and are impatient, disorganized, restless, and easily bored. Finally, in adulthood, individuals with ADD frequently change jobs and fail to live up to their full potential. In addition, both teens and adults with ADD have a higher chance of drug use and addiction. ADD is currently treated with Ritalin, a

stimulant which many individuals feel is over prescribed. Part of this over diagnosis is due to several lesser-known syndromes that may act like ADD. One of these is Asburgers Syndrome.

Asburgers Syndrome is one of the only disorders that can actually be clearly beneficial over the course of an individual's lifetime. Asburgers is currently classified as a low level autism. Asburgers leads to many of the signs of ADD, such as hyperactivity and inattentiveness. However, while individuals may suffer socially from this syndrome, they tend to hyper focus in math, science and engineering. This syndrome allows individuals to perform in these fields well above the levels of individuals who don't have the syndrome. Many of the top scientists, including Einstein, may have had Asburgers Syndrome.

Autism is characterized by the same symptoms as Asburgers, however, these symptoms are much more severe. Autistic individuals can perform amazing calculations in their head and have a very thorough grasp on math and science. The downside is that autistic individuals have almost no social abilities and have trouble making friends and may even have trouble speaking. An individual with autism may frequently appear to be retarded if they are asked a social question. Autism is far more rare than ADD and Asburgers and is far easier to diagnose.

Due to the similarity between Attention Deficit Disorder and Asburgers Syndrome, individuals are frequently misdiagnosed with ADD when they actually have

Asburgers. However, based on the strong similarities between the two syndromes, it is not a far stretch to state that the two are related. In fact, the misdiagnosis of ADD adds to this argument. ADD and Asburgers are so similar that even medical professionals trained to diagnose ADD frequently fail to distinguish the two. Both have hereditary traits and little is known about the cause of either.

In current scientific research, little attention has been paid to the possible connection between ADD and Asburgers. Asburgers is a rarer syndrome than ADD and is not well known. Currently researchers can not even get a fix on what causes either disorder. The majority of research goes towards figuring this out. However, from the viewpoint of an observer, the connection should be clear between Asburgers and ADD. Both are so similar that professionals cannot distinguish clearly between the two. While more research needs to be done to confirm this connection, an assumption can be fairly clearly made that the two are connected in some form.

Currently, ADD is still a relatively new disorder. Doctors and psychologists realize that something must be done about the growing number of individuals with ADD. Researchers cannot determine the cause of ADD and thus doctors turn to drugs such as Ritalin to solve the problems of individuals with ADD. Ritalin is a stimulant which accelerates the body function of an individual with ADD. This acceleration allows individuals to better cope with one of the known factors of ADD, which is that Attention Deficit Disorder accelerates mental activity beyond normal levels. However, this brain

activity takes place in the centers responsible for imagination. The centers used for thinking and rationalizing actually slow down.

It is this slow down that leads individuals with Attention Deficit Disorder to be inattentive and hyperactive. Current theory is that overactive imaginations cause individuals to enter a "dream world" and they want to constantly live out what their imaginations tell them. Although, the signs of ADD may make sense, the cause is still very unclear. In the past, many things have been blamed for causing ADD, ranging from lead and radiation to sugar and television. Some have blamed ADD on MTV, however it is now more commonly believed that the success of MTV is because of ADD. Also, family problems have been blamed, but it now seems it is ADD which causes the family problems.

Currently, the prevailing theory is that ADD is caused by a brain malfunction. However, this theory fails to explain the similarities between ADD and Asburgers. If ADD was in fact a brain malfunction, Asburgers should clearly have a more destructive influence on the individuals who have the syndrome. However, in reality, Asburgers helps individuals to succeed in the world. The only damage is a slight antisocial element which can easily be overcome with time. So if Asburgers is so similar to ADD and does not have a negative influence, it can only be assumed that ADD and Asburgers must be parts of an enhancement or microevolution of the species.

Attention Deficit Disorder is clearly hereditary and enhances the speed at which data can be processed. This would generally be a good thing, however, because information can not be provided fast enough to keep the brain occupied, boredom, one of the main symptoms of ADD results. To combat this boredom, an individual's mind begins to wonder and the utilize their imagination to provide them with "information" to think about. Also, the high rate of drug use(Harvard Mental Health 2), particularly hallucinogens and stimulants, among individuals with ADD can be linked with this theory. Both of these drugs create more data to provide to the brain.

Hyperactivity, another symptom of ADD, can be explained by this theory. Because individuals with ADD require more information to keep themselves occupied, frequent movement and intense experiences such as MTV or changing activities frequently provide an individual with enough stimulus to keep their mind occupied. This clearly explains the neglected homework and dropped projects of many students with ADD. In addition, this theory links together the symptoms of ADD, which are currently not clearly connected. (Harvard Mental Health 2)

However, ADD is not the last step in genetic micro-evolution but rather the first. Asburgers Syndrome should be considered the next step. As micro-evolution continues, ADD would provide increased brain capabilities, but would lead to a strong need for a better way to gain information. Out of twelve individuals surveyed who showed clear signs of ADD or Asburgers (but on an undiagnosable level) or who had Asburgers, eleven individuals were found to have strong signs of hypersensitive senses. In addition,

out of fifteen individuals surveyed with ADD, only several showed even mild signs of hypersensitive senses. Hypersensitive senses, an increase in the ability to gain information through the senses, would allow an individual with the same increase in brain capabilities to process more real information about their environment. By receiving more sensory input, an individual would not suffer the drawbacks of an individual who simply has ADD. Enough information would be provided to the brain and would therefore not require that individual to use their imagination to create “information”.

The final support for this concept is that of simple Darwinian theory. Clearly this theory supports ADD and Asburgers as a genetic enhancement. Darwinian theory would prove that the rise in the number of individuals with ADD and Asburgers would indicate that it must be of some benefit. If ADD and Asburgers are disorders as current theory states, natural selection would have wiped out all traces of ADD before it got to the level that it is at now.

The social impact of such a micro evolutionary change have already been seen to some extent. The individuals with Asburgers are rising to higher positions in the scientific and technological worlds. It is believed that many scientists, including Einstein may have had Attention Deficit Disorder or Asburgers Syndrome. Also, individuals with such genetic enhancements would seem slightly weird. They display abilities such as being able to tell which television is on from across a large room even when no picture is displayed or being able to detect the distortion that carbon monoxide causes in the air. These abilities will give individuals an edge over people without these gifts and allow

them to perform better in the business world. This can clearly be seen by the rise of the Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, many of whom have low level ADD or Asburgers Syndrome.

In the future, it may be realized that ADD and Asburgers do not detract from an individuals ability to perform but rather add to it. As these abilities are discovered and spread, it will eventually lead to increased productivity and performance for society as a whole. While every change is met with some amount of doubt and distain, in the end natural selection will prevail and the species will move forward as a whole.