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Lefties are an interesting lot

by Mark Pavilons

?God made everyone right-handed; the truly gifted overcome it!?

It's nice to be recognized by your peers, and the rest of the world.

For the first time, scientists have identified the genetic differences associated with left-handedness, a trait found in 10% of the human population.

These genetic variants result in differences in brain structure, which mean that left-handed people have better verbal skills than the right-handed majority.

I?might add written skills too, but I?don't want to brag.

The study, conducted by scientists from the University of Oxford and published in the journal Brain, is the first to identify which genetic variants separate the lefties from the righties.

The research could suggest a correlation between left-handedness and superior verbal skills. Further research must be conducted to test this potential advantage, however. The gene LRRTM1 is a strong contributing factor for left-handedness. Scientists discovered the gene during a study of dyslexic children and believe it is inherited from the father.

Left-handers exhibit, on average, a more developed right brain hemisphere, which is specialized for processes such as spatial reasoning and the ability to rotate mental representations of objects.

The corpus callosum ? the bundle of nerve cells connecting the two brain hemispheres ? tends to be larger in left-handers. I've long espoused that mine is bigger!

This suggests that some left-handers have an enhanced connectivity between the two hemispheres and hence superior information processing. One theory suggests that living in a world designed for right-handers could be forcing southpaws to use both hands, thereby increasing connectivity. These peculiarities may be the reason why left-handers seem to have an edge in several professions and the arts. Lefties tend to lean towards things like music, creative arts, architecture, chess and more.

I love tiny, detailed models of pretty much everything and even adding a personal touch to out-of-the-box miniatures. I?can be a bit of a perfectionist at times.

I?know I'm in the minority but it's time to gather our forces and join the rebellion! It's time we put an end to inconsiderate devices: pens at the bank attached on the right side; always reading metric on a measuring cup; leaping over the spirals in a notebook, and using can openers and scissors. I live my life in dark bathrooms because I can never find the light switch on the left wall!

It's not just the devices themselves, but most things are positioned for easy access by the right hand. It's no wonder our lifespans are a bit shorter, many of us succumbing to injury caused by the righties. This may or may not be intentional!

Left-handers may be one of the last unorganized minorities in society because we have no collective power and no real sense of common identity. We have been criticized, ?changed,? and even burned at the stake for being different.

At various times in history, left-handedness has been seen as many things: a nasty habit, a mark of the devil, a sign of neurosis, rebellion, criminality, and homosexuality. On the plus side, it has also been seen as a trait indicating creativity and musical abilities.

Famous left-handed intellectuals include Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, and Benjamin Franklin. And, 20%?of all Mensa members are left-handed.

The word ?left? in English comes from the Anglo-Saxon word ?lyft,? which means weak or broken. The German for left-handed is linkisch, which means awkward, clumsy, and maladroit. In Italian, the word is mancino, which is derived from ?crooked? or ?maimed? and is also used to mean deceitful or dishonest. In Russian, to be called a left-hander (levja) is a term of insult.

In Latin, the word for left is sinister, related to the noun sinistrum. Ambisinister means ?clumsy on both sides.?

Among the Eskimos, every left-handed person is viewed as a potential sorcerer. In Morocco, left-handers are considered to be a s'ga, a word that means either a devil or a cursed person.

Now for some rational thinking ? the Incas thought left-handers were capable of healing and that they possessed magical abilities. The North American Zuni tribe believed left-handedness signified good luck. I'm no unicorn, but I do sparkle.

Tests conducted by St. Lawrence University in New York found that there were more left-handed people with IQs over 140 than right-handed people.

Wedding rings are traditionally worn on the left hand because people believed that a vena amoris, or a ?lover's vein,? connected the 4th finger on this hand to the heart.

The brains of left-handers process emotions differently than those of right-handers and are more susceptible to negative emotions, such as anger.

This is a lot to digest, but like any minority, I'm just asking for respect.?I?just want to be treated like everyone else!

In all honesty, I've never really had much of a problem being left-centric and some still marvel at my strange note-taking method.

OK, so learning the guitar is a bit more challenging and using a machine gun would result in bullets flying across my face.

Other than that, I'm good to go.

I say we put aside our dexterity issues and just get along!