

Breeding the Human Herd. Edward Dutton.

Falling intelligence is driving civilization's collapse. Political solutions won't work

A very short synopsis. The human genome is weakening very quickly and there is nothing we can do about it. Because we are getting stupider and less religious, and more narcissistic and self-centered, our civilization is headed for a collapse. There is no hope for society and even not much for individuals. Not a very cheerful prospect.

Amazon lists 18 books written by Edward Dutton since 2015 – about 2 ½ per year. Though they cover a broad range of topics, he returns frequently to the theme of the decay of the human genome and the consequent decay of human society. Topics in this series include:

The genius famine  
At Our Wits End  
J Philippe Rushton – a Life History Perspective  
Spiteful Mutants  
The Past Is a Future Country

His other books, about premature birth (including his own), the Finns, Muslims, judging people by their looks and so on also touch on his recurrent themes.

His broadest theme is that under harsh Darwinian selection the human genome improved rapidly and more or less continually, culminating at the end of the Enlightenment with the Industrial Revolution.

Throughout its history the human race was subject to purifying natural selection. Half of children died before reaching maturity. Those with mutations that made them unattractive as marriage partners – inability to make a living, a weak constitution, and unpleasant personality or deformed features – did not leave offspring. There is a high statistical correlation between wealth and intelligence, and the wealthier left twice as many children as the poor.

There were hiccups. As Oswald Spengler wrote a century ago, civilizations have life cycles. Civilization got ahead of itself with the Bronze Age, Greek and Roman civilizations. The wealthy became indolent and ceased believing in themselves or their culture and having children.

Our civilization has changed significantly after the Industrial Revolution. Public health got better. Society became wealthier. Government, churches and private charity allowed the impecunious to survive and raise their children. The wealthier abandoned religion and ignored its imperative to reproduce. They stopped having children.

With no purifying natural selection to check them, deleterious mutations spread throughout the population. The poorer, less intelligent fraction of the population is made up of r-selected people – those who live for the moment. They are not picky in choosing their mates. They often do not marry, which means that the personal qualities of sex objects don't matter much. Bad genes got passed on without a thought.

This danger was evident to Thomas Malthus in the early 19th century. Dutton quotes Charles Darwin's in 1871 "...excepting in the case of man himself, hardly any one is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed." It was already evident that the worst were breeding.

By the end of the century the eugenics movement was in full swing. Most of the leading intellects of the day supported it, including Darwin himself. Dutton's history of the eugenics movement is one of the strongest points of this book. Dutton's contribution is especially valuable because eugenics has been in such bad odor for so long that few people remember its onetime dominance, the eminence of its supporters, or the logic of its arguments.

Dutton overlooks nongenetic factors that have had an adverse impact. Vaccines, which appear to have induced autoimmune responses and changed our vulnerability to food allergies and all sorts of other substances in our environment. Dutton in fact credits vaccinations with improving public health. The evidence, from books by Andrew Wakefield and more recently the anonymous authors of *Turtles All The Way Down: Vaccine Science and Myth*, Robert Malone in [\[\[ASIN:B09R4Y6YKJ Lies my Government Told Me\]\]](#) and Robert Kennedy, is that the vaccines came after the

improvements in public health. Improvements are attributable more to better sanitation and better medications to treat the diseases.

Asthma was not reported as increasing until the 1970s, and peanut allergies started to gain significant coverage in 1990. Dutton writes that there is probably an environmental factor. If it were just genes, it would have been underway since the Industrial Revolution. It is temporally aligned with the increase in recommended immunizations.

Dutton notes that his friend Rick Conrad passed away on May 1, 2021, from Covid. One might note that this was exactly the time that vaccines were being pushed on everybody in the United States, and very few deaths were all attributed to the immunization itself.

The strongest chapters in the book are those describing the vast increase in human intelligence as our brains quadrupled in size from the chimpanzee's one third of a liter to our modern one and one third liter. Dutton explains why it should have been expected – intelligent men are better hunters, warriors and coalition builders – and how the theory is supported by measurements.

The correlation between wealth and intelligence is indisputable. The wealthy had more surviving children. They were more literate and numerate. They needed these skills in their daily lives.

Increased reading by the general public, increasingly complex plots, word usage and cultural reference within books give witness to rising literacy. Increasingly complex commerce required more arithmetic in the form of bookkeeping and planning. Falling interest rates reflect an increasing ability on the part of both borrower and lender to just ability to repay loans.

There are measurements of elementary cognitive tasks. Color discrimination is correlated with intelligence. Dutton does not mention pitch discrimination, recognized by intelligence pioneers Galton and Spearman as correlated with intelligence. Simple reaction times we know only in the negative – they have been rising for the past century and a half, corresponding with the fall in average intelligence. The frequency of alleles associated with high intelligence, which can be measured in antique as well as modern DNA, rose until the Industrial Revolution and have been falling since. Brain size, correlated with measured IQ, rose over the centuries in England.

At the time of the Industrial Revolution the rich stopped having large families. Napoleon lamented the lack of future soldiers. When childhood mortality dropped to zero and the poor could have large families, they did. Conversely, the rich did not derive status from big families. They stopped believing in a God telling them to be fruitful and multiply. And they found other outlets for their libido, such as homosexuality. Intelligence is 80% heritable, and the most fertile element of society switched from the richest to the poorest.

This is a very timely book. As the world makes attempt after attempt to halt the collapse of civilization, we need to recognize that evolution trumps politics. There are no political solutions to evolutionary problems.