

Is it all in the genes?

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99 % of my DNA – my genes is similar to that of all other humans, and slightly less to that of other animals. I share genes with a simple leaf of bread.

Genes are not what determines me

I like DNA- if it brings us unexpected encounters,

if it brings us connections with people you wouldn't otherwise have met

I like it if it confronts us with history,

if it brings out long silenced episodes of human history as the slave trade,

if it stimulates an ongoing search

I don't like DNA if it is regarded as a source of me,

as a centre of what could be important.

What someone in a laboratory thinks to see in a particle of my body might be a small part of my history

What I can find in written records or in beliefs and customs that have travelled through continents and generations, in intangible heritage, in paintings and music, teaches me so much more

So much more complicated matters

What matters is the living body,

With the heart beat

With the skin

With the brains

With the questions

With poetry, music, words, dreams and above all with other people past and present.