

# Do Parents Matter?

Sharon Begley, in a recent article in Newsweek magazine, discusses the claims of Judith Rich Harris, author of *The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn Out the Way They Do; Parents Matter Less Than You Think and Peers Matter More* (464 pages. Free Press. \$26).

Begley summarizes Harris' claims in the following sentences:

“After parents contribute an egg or a sperm filled with DNA, she argues, virtually nothing they do or say – no kind words or hugs, slaps or tirades; neither permissiveness nor authoritarianism; neither encouragement nor scorn – makes a smidgen of difference to what kind of adult the child becomes. Nothing parents do will affect his behavior, mental health, ability to form relationships, sense of self-worth, intelligence or personality. What genes don't do, peers do.”

List five ideas/experiences/examples/facts to support and five ideas/experiences/examples/facts that refute Judith Rich Harris' thesis.

Support	Refutation