

What makes someone human

Psychology



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What Makes Someone Human? The start of human or personhood is the time when an individual starts being considered a person. The exact moment as well as the nature of the start of personhood is not yet unanimously agreed upon. The definition of personhood or a human being and characteristics that makes someone human has been under discussion in science, philosophy, and religion. The subject of at what time and how personhood starts in a person's life has played a crucial role in political, religious, as well as philosophical aspects. Notable issues that have enhanced the discussion related to personhood include abortion, the female reproductive rights, as well as debates on who is entitled to human rights. Different people as well as professions define humanness differently. However, all agree that humanness is defined not only by the physical characteristics but also by other factors such as the functional and sociological factors. There have been heated discussions on what makes a person human since personhood requires entitlement to human rights. The aspect of personhood is based on genetic factors, social factors, as well as the functioning capability. This paper will focus on the question of what makes someone human. The issue of whether proper socialization is important in making one human as well as the issue of whether personhood requires both nature and nurture will be discussed. Additionally, the importance of learning and language in defining humanhood will be discussed.

Humans are different from other organisms since they are social beings. The closest relatives of humans, chimpanzees, have their DNA very similar to that of humans but they are not considered human. This is because they lack certain characteristics such as rationality, ability to reason, as well as show empathy (Pollard, 2009). In other words, being a person makes one entitled to

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certain rights such as liberty, life, and the quest of happiness. To be considered human, certain aspects are considered. These include proper socialization, self-expression, as well as ability to communicate.

The scientific and the philosophical ways of defining personhood or the aspects that makes one human differ. Scientifically, personhood is defined by the genetic composition. Human beings have different DNA as well as genes that distinguish them from other species. This is because the human genome is the most developed and enables accord features such as reasoning, empathy, and rationality to humans, which differentiate human from other species that lack such feature. Scientifically, humanness somehow begins few weeks after conception and develops with time.

Scientifically nature or surroundings are important in defining the qualities of a person. Additionally, development of human features such as speech and language take time and require nurturing (Pollard, 2009).

On the other hand, philosophy defines human-hood in terms of the certain characteristics such as moral obligation, rationality, empathy, as well as reasonability. Philosophically a foetus is not considered human since it lacks aspects such as empathy. In Addition, loss of the feature defining human such as being in a coma makes one not to be considered as morally human (Pollard, 2009).

In conclusion, the factors that make a person or a being human are not yet agreed upon universally. However, science has studied genome of different organism and found human genome to be the most complex and to carry genes that code for human characteristics such as rationality, speech development, reasonability a well as empathy. Philosophy on the other hand argues that personhood starts after one develops human characteristics.

Philosophically, a foetus is not human and persons in comma are less human. Both science and philosophy agree that personhood makes one entitled to rights such as liberty, protection, as well as other human rights.

Reference

Pollard, K. (2009, April 20). What Makes Us Human? Scientific America Retrieved 2 July 2012 from <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=what-makes-us-human>.