

Humans hard-wired to be generous

A study by government scientists in Washington indicates humans are hard-wired to be unselfish.

Neuroscientists Jorge Moll and Jordan Grafman of the National Institutes of Health say experiments they conducted have led them to conclude unselfishness is not a matter of morality, The Washington Post reports.

Rather, the two say altruism is something that makes people feel good, lighting up a primitive part of the human brain that usually responds to food or sex.

Grafman and Moll have been scanning the brains of volunteers who were asked to think about a scenario involving either donating a sum of money to charity or keeping it for themselves.

They are among scientists across the United States using imaging and psychological experiments to study whether the brain has a built-in moral compass.

The results are showing many aspects of morality appear to be hard-wired in the brain, opening up a new window on what it means to be good.

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