

Life Is A Lottery

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Preamble:

Life is a lottery.

Those who succeed in the game of life tend to dramatically underestimate the degree to which they have been helped by luck, while overestimating the degree to which their success was driven by their own hard work.

There are 6 lotteries that will be covered in this piece: Country of Birth, Health, Intelligence, Family Wealth, Looks, Psychiatric Disorders

1) Country of Birth:

What country you are born in and *when* you are born is immensely important for determining whether you will have a great life or a terrible life.

If you were born in America in the year 1950, you won. If you were born in Germany in the year 1920, you lost.

2) Health:

Whether you are born with the genetics to have perfect health until age 80, or the genetics to get cancer at age 16, is immensely important.

This is entirely a matter of luck.

3) Intelligence:

Whether you were born with the genetics to have a high IQ or a low IQ is immensely important, since IQ is the single most powerful predictor of long term life success.

IQ is the single best predictor of an individual's *income*.

If you have a high IQ, the overwhelming probability is you will end up towards the top of the macro dominance hierarchy (rich). If you have a low IQ, the overwhelming probability is you will end up towards the bottom of the macro dominance hierarchy (poor).

4) Family Wealth:

Whether you are born into a rich family or a poor family is immensely important for determining your quality of life, particularly during childhood.

5) Looks:

Whether you were born with the genetics to be good looking or ugly is immensely important.

If you are good looking, succeeding in job interviews and office politics will be easy (since you benefit from the halo effect). Being good looking certainly helps with success in the dating market.

If you are ugly, your life is going to be way harder than it otherwise would have been.

6) Psychiatric Disorders:

Whether you are psychologically healthy or insane is largely driven by genetics, and in this sense it is largely driven by luck.

If you are psychologically healthy, you won this lottery. If you are a paranoid schizophrenic, you lost this lottery.

Epilogue:

The purpose of this piece is to remind you to not automatically pass harsh judgment upon those who are suffering.

In all likelihood they are suffering due to factors entirely out of their control.