PC Vs. Mac: Heredity or Environment?

Mini-Review: Mac Upgrade and Repair Bible

Mini-Review: Kensington's Keyboard•in•a•Box

PC vs. Mac: Heredity or Environment?

I read an interesting fact. Though women and men share the same average IQ, men are far more likely to occupy both the top and the bottom of the bell curve than women. In other words, men are smarter and dumber than women, to be blunt. While this accounts for the fact that men have ruled intellectual pursuits such as science and, well, chess, it also perhaps goes a long ways towards explaining why well over 90% of prisons contain men.

Now I'm not a sexist (and if by saying so you judge me to be one, then that's your own problem). I've known enough intelligent, prosperous, strong women in my life to know how well off women can be. In fact, until recently, I've been rather disgusted with my own sex, because most of the men I seem to come into contact with each day appear to enjoy occupying that lower end of the bell curve.

This ties in to society as a whole, and gender specifically. Are homosexual people born that way or does their environment shape the way in which they live their lives? And to be perhaps too thoughtful, or perhaps to attempt to correlate something which may not be appropriate, are PC and Mac people born that way or are they shaped by their lives?

Like homosexuality, one could probably argue either side. Personally, my mother being a teacher, I've been around Apple machines since my first experiences with Oregon Trail and Number Munchers. My grade school education was done on the earliest Apple IIs and Macs, and by the time I reached high school we had owned a few Apple machines in our home, including the venerable LC II, which I cut my teeth on each and every day for three years straight.

A good friend of mine, however, was not shaped in any such way. In fact, his schooling was much like mine — Macs in the classroom. However, when it came time for him to purchase his own machine, he decided to go Wintel. Why? Some would say price, but I had prepared a big list of inexpensive Macs for him. Some may suggest peer pressure, but I and another, a PC user, were the only two who were suggesting things to him.

People say that Macs are for creative free-thinkers, and PCs are for people that follow in the rut of things. Society has assigned the label "creative" to authors, artists, musicians, and the like. Businessmen, accountants, and other "dull" people (pardon me for saying) are more likely to be PC users. Scientists? Well, we're somewhere in the middle.

So suppose our major area of interest affects our computer usage. Suppose artists are more likely to use a Mac, and business folks more likely to use a PC. One could perhaps make such a correlation with a fairly significant fact base. The next logical question, then, would be this: is one's career, one's passion, genetic or environmental? Are people born artists, or are they shaped by childhood experiences?

That question may never be answered. But let's hope it's not genetic, because no doubt Microsoft would get themselves up to something…

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Mini-Review: Mac Upgrade and Repair Bible

It's not often that I find a Mac book that contains useful information. I'm not trying to be cocky, but I tend to know what there is to know about how to use my Mac. I know what TCP/IP stands for and I know how to use my AppleTalk network to share printers. In fact, the one Mac book I own is Ted Landau's venerable Sad Macs, Bombs, and Other Disasters (visit Ted Landau's MacFixIt on the web at http://www.macfixit.com/).

However, I'm adding a second book to that very short list. The Mac Upgrade and Repair Bible, by Todd Stauffer, is a very worthy book that covers, in fine detail, just about everything there is to know about upgrading and repairing every current Mac model out there. Just this weekend I needed to crack into a Performa 6320, and without this book I'm sure it would have been a nightmare.

 judge a book not by its cover (though this book has a
nice smooth cover), but by its content. Can I learn
anything from this book? Though Shakespeare and
Thoreau went a long way towards teaching me the ways
of the world, they pale in comparison to how much this
book has already taught me in the two weeks I've had it.

Need to know just what in the world RAM is before you
figure out whether you should upgrade yours (or how)?
This book will tell you. Don't know how to set up a RAID? Find that information here. Just what is IDE and how can I use it? What's LocalTalk? What's a cost-effective way to add a DV/DVCAM solution to my current setup?

This book's got it all. As much as Sad Macs is a software troubleshooter (it covers some hardware), the Mac Upgrade and Repair Bible is a hardware helping hand (it covers some software too). My one complaint? The pictures are too dark. Other than that, this book is top notch.

Swing by the Mac Upgrade and Repair Bible's dedicated website at http://www.mac-upgrade.com/ for more information. Then, rush out and pick up this book. It's a steal at $39.99 (or less!).

If you've got a book that you'd like to see a mini-review done on, or any other product, email my editor at erik@applewizards.net and we'll see what we can do.

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Mini-Review: Kensington's Keyboard•in•a•Box

It's not often that people think about their keyboards. Perhaps they think about them when they spill Cherry Coke in them, or when the S key fails to work every time. Perhaps they don't think about them until their wife complains that the click-clack of the keys are keeping her awake at night.

Since I must claim the last case for my own, I decided to try out an alternative to my current Apple Extended keyboard. Kensington, one of my favorite hardware makers, offers a Keyboard•in•a•Box, meant to replace the Apple 105-key keyboard. The keys are, of course, in the same place (though the power button is flush instead of heightened), so there's no adjustment. It's essentially just that — a replacement.

he first thing I noticed was that, though
the keyboard is the same width as my
Apple one, it didn't fit in my keyboard
tray. Why? Well, you see, the ADB cord
plugs into the left-hand (or right-hand)
side of the keyboard, not the middle. This means that you've got to have a little extra space or you'll end up having to bend the ADB cable 90 degrees — not a wise thing to do.

The second thing that I noticed were that they keys were harder to push. I type pretty darn fast — 80 words a minute or so. My fingers "flutter" over the keys and don't have time to push on them very hard. I routinely mistyped words the first two weeks I used the Kensington keyboard. Then, either I learned to push harder (a few days of sore fingers later) or the keys loosened up. I'm not sure which.

Zzzzzzzz. That's the sound of the wife snoring (approximately). What's that mean? Perhaps it means that Kensington has lived up to their promise, delivering a quiet keyboard that you can just plug right in and begin using. For $49.95, the Keyboard•in•a•Box is worthy of your consideration the next time your Cherry Coke somehow finds its way between your G and H keys.

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