

HDFS 129
Dr. Corneal
1/21/14

Nature vs. Nurture

Nature → the influence of heredity on development or biologically based predispositions

Inhibited adolescences often become inhibited adults

Nurture → Forces in the environment that influence development

Includes: diet, circumstances in the womb, nutrition, viruses, birth complications, schooling, cultural and community influences

How do Nature and Nurture interact?

Traits which have a substantial genetic predisposition:

- intelligence (IQ)
- verbal ability
 - how well you express yourself, write
- vocational interest
- scholastic achievement
- memory

Traits with genetic loading

- extroversion/introversion
- neuroticism
- openness
 - independent and imaginative, vs. being conformative
- conscientiousness
 - organized, careful, not impulsive
- agreeableness

2007 study of Baby Einstein videos

- Drs Christakis and Zimmerman, U of Washington
- Evidence to suggest that videos may impede language development for infants ages 8-16 months
 - Not only do they not help, they may hurt

- 17% drop in vocabulary for babies who watched videos, compared to babies who did not watch the videos. But, instead, engaged in the typical face-to-face interactions with adults
- Language development flourishes in normal face-to-face interactions

Disorders which have a substantial genetic predisposition:

- Depression/anxiety
- Autism
- Alzheimer's disease
- Schizophrenia
- Alcoholism

When researchers report that traits are heritable, they typically mean that genes account for 30-60% of the variation you see in that trait

The ENVIRONMENT modifies or enhances traits to which we are predisposed

- The environment can bring out or repress traits that we are predisposed to

Stability vs. change

1. Is personality stable over time?
 - a. To what extent can we change? From life experiences?