**Social and Emotional Development**

**Biological Perspectives and Influences**

# I. Theoretical perspectives

## A. Ethology

**1. Assumptions**

**2. As applied to human development, this means…**

a) early experience important (**critical (sensitive) periods**)

b) methodology ( **ethogram/deprivation study**

**3. Examples:**

a) Attachment

b) Peer relations - Dominance hierarchies

**4. Evaluation of ethological theory:**

Contributions:

Criticisms:

## B. Behavior Genetics Approach

1. Assumptions

* What are the biological bases for differences between individuals?

2. Some definitions

3. How do behavior geneticists go about answering this question?

* family studies

4. Ways to quantify genetic contribution

* Concordance rates/Heritability estimates

5. Problems with behavior-genetics approach:

## C. Gene/Environment Interactions

1. **Range of Reaction (differential Susceptibility)**

2. **Canalization**

**3. Gene-environment correlations** (Scarr & McCartney, 1983)

##### Passive

* *Evocative*
* *Active/niche-picking*

A developmental perspective

**II. Biological Preparedness for Social Interactions**

1. **Perceptual capacities and preferences**
2. **Early reflexes and behaviors**
3. **Emotional preparedness**
4. **Cognitive capacities**

**III. Neurological bases for social development**

1. **Brain Development**
2. **The role of experience**
3. Experience expectant vs. Experience dependent
4. Mirror neurons

**IV. Temperament**

**A. Dimensions of Temperament**

**B. Thomas & Chess:**

1. easy
2. difficult
3. slow-to-warm-up child

**C. Rothbart**

1. Effortful Control

2. Negative Affectivity

3. Surgency/Extroversion

**D. Measurement techniques**

1. Parental report
2. Observation techniques
3. Limitations to temperament assessments

**E. Temperament and Development**

1. stability

2. heritability

3. Neuronal correlates

4. Temperament as predictor

**F. Environmental influences on temperament**

1. parents/family - **goodness of fit**

2. Belsky – lawful discontinuity

3. Kochanska - parenting, temperament and conscience development

4. Cultural Influences