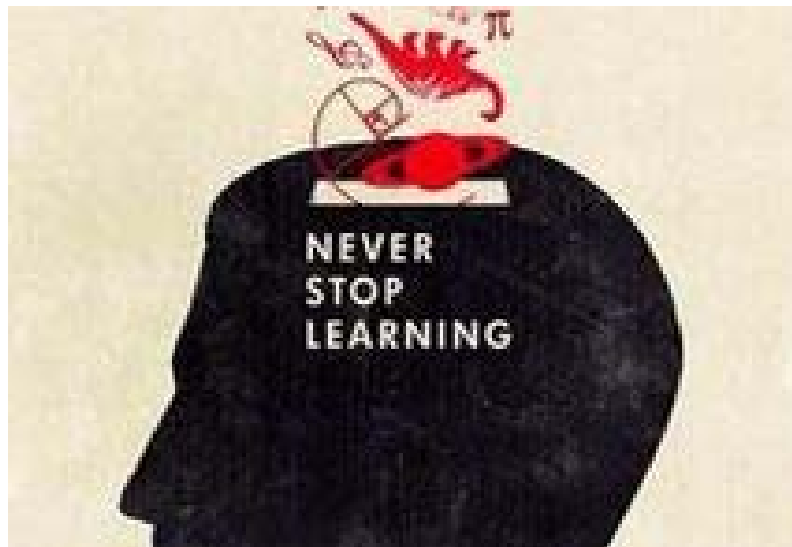


Lifelong Process & Nature vs. Nurture



Lifelong Process

Affects your behavior and orientation

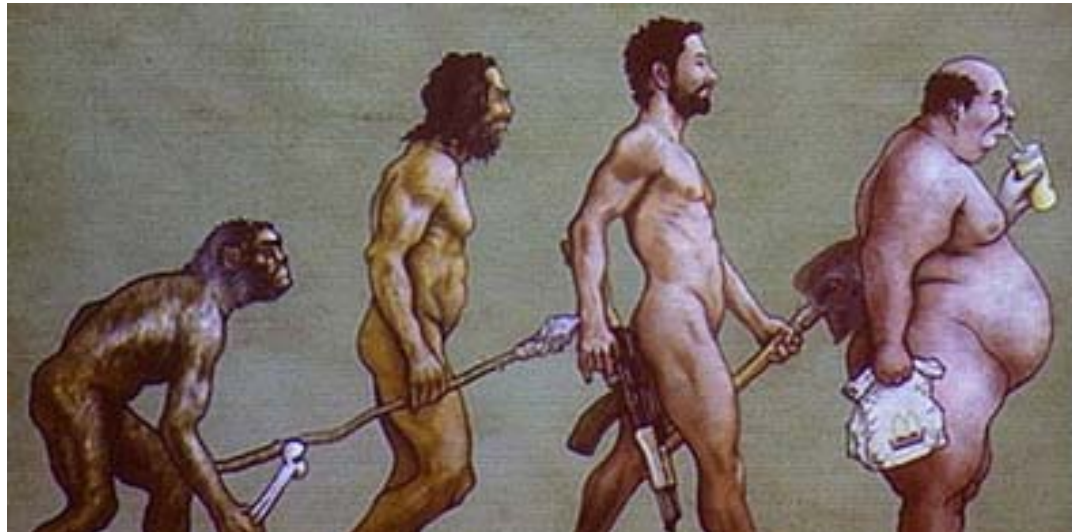
Life course differs by social location

Social class, race-ethnicity and gender all map out distinctive worlds of experience

How do you think your view of the world differs from teens in North Korea?

How your view of the world differs from when you were 6?

How your world view differs from those of the opposite sex?



- Several hundred years ago, Europeans viewed children more as miniature adults
 - Age 7 – children began to perform adult roles
 - sent off to learn a trade
 - take over housekeeping duties
- Moral duty to terrorize children
 - learn life lessons
 - think scared straight



Childhood (birth-12)

Industrialization changed our perceptions of “childhood”

- Increased leisure time meant more children could go to school longer
- Children seen as tender, innocent and need care, comfort, and protection

Childhood is more than natural biology

- Historical, Social, Geographic contexts shape childhood



Adolescence (13-17)

“Adolescence” is social invention not a natural age division

- Decrease in need for young workers
- Increase in demand for longer education
- Creates a gap between childhood and adulthood



Addition of adolescence period has social consequences:

- Uncertainty
- Rebellion
- Inner turmoil
- Search for self-identity

Who am I? Where do I fit in?



Transitional Adulthood (18-29)

A new invented category added by society in the last couple of decades

Postindustrialized countries have extended youth again

Neither psychological adolescents nor sociological adults



Middle Years (30-62)

- More sure of yourself and your goals in life
- You have eased into adult responsibilities



Later Years (≈ 63 on)

- Health issues and mortality become increasingly important
- Reorientation in thinking **from time since birth to time left to live**
- Compare your life accomplishments with life goals



Death & Dying

- Increases in nutrition, medicine and public health have extended our life period
- Early agricultural societies saw old age beginning around 40
- Industrialization extended that to the 60s
- “Death” is no longer a vague notion but an increasing reality



Are we prisoners of socialization?

- People as robots: Socialization goes in and behavior comes out

FALSE!

- Socialization is powerful but the self is dynamic and flexible
- People are not passive sponges absorbing material and reactions of others – We are actively involved in the construction of self



Nature vs. Nurture

- Age old debate in psychology, sociology, child development, biology, etc.
- To what extent are we formed by nature (genetics/biology) versus nurture (life experiences/lessons)



N v. N Examples

Ability- does a specific ability seem to run in your family?

perhaps you come from an *athletic* family

perhaps you come from a *musical* family

Are these abilities something genetic or just due to environment?

Racism- Are people born to be racist or is it something that is learned?

What do you think?

Homosexuality- People used to believe that homosexuality was learned.

How does society view homosexuality now?

Additional Resources

- <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~jmahoney/socializ.htm>