

**The Skimm on How we become Who we are
Chapters 27-30 & associated lectures/readings**

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what others have done.” – Jean Piaget

1. HOW DOES CHANGE OCCUR IN DEVELOPMENT?

Development occurs throughout the **lifespan**, but we tend to focus on infants/kids because that's where change is most rapid. Change occurs via the combination of **nature** and **nurture** in **sensitive periods**.

1a. THE STORY.

Attachment is a strong bond between a child and caregiver. Some theories of attachment (e.g., **Cupboard theory**) stress the role of basic bio needs (e.g., food). But just ask **Harlow** and **Bowlby**, comfort is probably more important. Depending on how comfort and bio needs are met, different attachment patterns form (e.g., **secure**, **insecure-avoidant**, **insecure-ambivalent**). This has implications for later social bonds. **Vygotsky** bridged social and the cognitive development because he stressed the importance of culture/social factors in the development of thinking. He proposed two main mechanisms for change: **Internalization** and working within the **Zone of Proximal Development**. **Piaget** is the big hitter in cognitive development, and although his theory isn't perfect, it is still hugely influential today. Piaget was interested in how thinking changes (esp. logical thinking about problems). He proposed a series of stages (i.e., **discontinuous development**).

1b. REMIND ME.

How do you study human's who can't speak (or at least not with the same proficiency as an adult)? Various observational procedures, including the **habituation** procedure work out okay. **Ainsworth** also developed the **strange situation**, which helps us identify **patterns of attachment** based on the child's **separation anxiety**. Piaget had a number of **conservation tasks** and primarily used his own kids to study how their thought processes changed in responding to these conservation problems through development. He specifically found two processes to be important: **Assimilation** and **Accommodation**. He ultimately determined 4 stages: **sensorimotor**, **preoperational**, **concrete operational**, and **formal operational**.

1c. So...WHAT ABOUT BEYOND CHILDHOOD?

We are living in an aging society and there is substantial **heterogeneity** in how we age. As we age, there are changes in biology (e.g., brain and body), cognition (e.g., declines in fluid intellect, processing speed, working memory), social networks (reduced), and emotion and well-being (increases, yay!). However **personality** (most commonly measured with the 5-factor system) remains relatively stable. **Successful aging** involves avoiding disease, maintaining high levels of cognitive and physical functioning, and staying engaged.

1d. theSKIMM.

Change across the lifespan occurs due to nature, nurture, and the interactions between nature and nurture.

2. REPEAT AFTER ME...

2a. What to say when your niece thinks you've disappeared behind that blanket again.

#Objectpermanence

2b. What to say when you see development described in discrete stages.

Stages can be helpful for describing development, but development isn't as linear and fragmented as stages prescribe. Nor does it happen in the same order for each person. Nor do all of the critical "events" within a stage occur all at once. Development is much more continuous than many theories describe.

2c. What to say to that friend who keeps holding out that their sig other *can and WILL* change.

Um.. Sorry, probably not. Personality is the characteristic way that people differ from one another, and our traits reflect the basic ways we differ. People are pretty consistent across situations and over time. So good luck (but maybe say good riddance?)

3. THINGS TO KNOW (i.e., vocab)

3a. Terms: Attachment patterns/styles, cohort, conservation problems, continuous development, cross-sectional studies, cupboard theory, discontinuous development, effortful control, goodness of fit, habituation procedure, information processing theories, heterogeneity, independent traits, internalization, intra/inter-individual differences, lifespan theories, locus of control, longitudinal studies, nature, nurture, OCEAN (5-factor Model, Big 5), object permanence, personality, personality traits, Piaget's stages, processing speed, quantitative changes, qualitative changes, reliability, Rich rats/poor rats study, security of attachment, self-enhancement bias, separation anxiety, social referencing, sociocultural theories, socioemotional selectivity theory, strange situation, successful aging, temperament, theory of mind, validity, well-being, zone of proximal development

3b. Some Names: Ainsworth, Bowlby, Harlow, Piaget, Vygotsky

3c. (But these aren't the only things that are important!)