

Psychology 2200

Developmental Psychology I: Fundamentals

Questions and Theories

learning objectives

- describe two historical philosophies about how children develop
- describe four fundamental issues on the topic of child development
- give 3 examples of human development that supports *each side* of each fundamental issue
- identify which side of each issue is right or whether and why it depends



what changes as people grow? trajectory

normative approach
measure many individuals and
compute age-related averages



G. Stanley Hall



Arnold Gesell

developmental psychology

- **trajectory:** What changes and when?
- **mechanism:** How does change take place?
 - to stoke interest, meet Jack Andraka

Jack Andraka, 15 years old

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19291258>

Trajectory.

When did he get so smart?
How far ahead is he?

Mechanism.

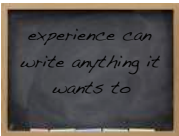
How did he get to be so smart?

how does development happen?

Locke: blank slate
experience only



Rousseau: maturation
genetically determined natural unfolding



lead to 4 fundamental questions

fundamental issues

a popularity game

- Let's have some fun with developmental psychology
- I will outline four fundamental issues in developmental psychology
- Break up into 8 groups (4 issues x 2 sides for each question)
- I will assign each group to take on 1 side of 1 issue
- Each group comes up with the best examples and arguments for their side of their issue
- Each group will elect 1-2 representatives
- Two sides for issue 1 will debate
- The class will take sides using I>CLICKER



1 nature or nurture?

Are genetic or environmental factors more important in influencing development?

genetic (nature)

environmental (nurture)



eye colour
nature



religion
nurture



2

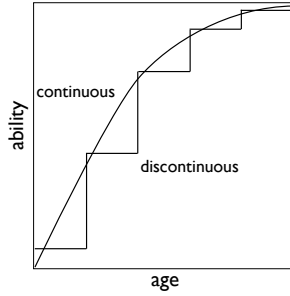
discontinuous?



height = continuous

Is human development continuous or discontinuous?

- discontinuous
- continuous



3

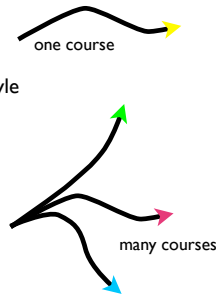
one course or many?



- order of milestones
- causes and effects

Does everyone follow the same developmental course or are there many developmental courses?

- only one
- more than one



4

sensitive period?

drinking alcohol
sensitive



Does human development have a sensitive period or are all points in development equally sensitive?

- A. sensitive period
- B. no sensitive period

learning piano
not sensitive



take-home message

- four questions come up over and over in developmental psychology
- sweeping generalizations about these fundamental questions may hold a little truth
- but most of the truth is "it depends on the psychological function"
- e.g., emotional style, thinking style, eye colour
- for each psychological function, we will return to some of these fundamental issues throughout the course
