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## ECOLOGICAL THEORY - sociocultural view of development

- five environmental systems ranging from fine-grained inputs of direct interactions with social agents to broad-based inputs of culture
  - MICROSYSTEM
    - ▶ setting in which an individual lives
    - ▶ family, peers, school, neighborhood
    - ▶ most direct interactions with agents
    - ▶ individual helps **construct** settings, not passive
    - ▶ most research has focused on microsystem
  - MESOSYSTEM
    - ▶ relations between microsystems, connections between contexts
    - ▶ relation of family experiences to school experiences, school to church, family to peers
      - ▶ example: child who experiences parental rejection may have difficulty with school; certain peer influences may cause family turmoil
  - EXOSYSTEM
    - ▶ experiences in a social setting in which an individual does not have an active role but which nevertheless influence experience in an immediate context
      - ▶ example: a parent's job experiences will affect family life which, in turn, will affect children—travel requirements, job stress, amount of pay
      - ▶ example: governmental agencies fund parks, libraries that create microsystem environments
  - MACROSYSTEM
    - ▶ attitudes/ideologies of the culture in which individuals live
      - ▶ Judeo-Christian ethic, democracy, ethnicity
  - CHRONOSYSTEM
    - ▶ the patterning of environmental events and transitions over the life course; effects created by time or critical periods in development
      - ▶ example: disruptive effects of divorce peak one year after the divorce, with effects more negative for sons than for daughters (Hetherington, 1989)
    - ▶ sociohistorical conditions

## EVALUATION

- comprehensive model of environmental influences on development
- sociocultural emphasis (see Vygotsky)
- failure to adequately account for influence of biological and cognitive processes



