

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & GUIDE RESEARCH

PERSPECTIVE	NOTABLE THEORIES/EXAMPLES THAT ALIGN	MAIN IDEA	BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL EMPHASES (Biopsychosocial = the interacting of biological, sociocultural, and psychological forces on development)	NATURE or NURTURE (Nature = genetic factors that influence development) (Nurture = environmental factors that influence development)
Psychodynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sigmund Freud, Psychosexual TheoryErik Erikson, Psychosocial Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In both theories, development occurs across a sequence of stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Both theories emphasize psychological, social, and life-cycle forces as crucial in development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nature & NurtureUniversal sequence for all, but individual differences in rate
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Behaviorism (John B. Watson, B.F. Skinner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Environment controls behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In all theories, some emphasis on biological and psychological factors, but most is placed on social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nurture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">People learn through observation & interaction		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nurture
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development (Jean Piaget)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For Piaget & Kohlberg development occurs across a sequence of stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For Piaget & Kohlberg the main emphasis is placed on biological and social forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For Piaget & Kohlberg, strong bent toward natureUniversal sequence of stages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development (Lawrence Kohlberg)			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory (Lev Vygotsky)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Development is influenced by culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emphasis is placed on psychological and social forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nature & Nurture
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ecological Systems Theory (Urie Bronfenbrenner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developing person is embedded in a series of interacting systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Heavy emphasis is placed on social forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nature & Nurture
Humanistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Carl Rogers; Abraham Maslow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Emphasizes free will and the ability of humans to make choices about their life.Has had little impact on the field of lifespan development as the humanistic perspective does not identify any developmental change that is the result of increasing age or experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Rejects the idea that behavior is determined by unconscious processes, learning from the environment, or cognitive processing, but that people make their own choices about life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bent toward nurture

Source: Adapted from Kail & Cavanaugh, 2007; Feldman, 2014