Theories of Social Cognition

• Focus on the internal forces as source of development
• **Self-socialization**: children’s active shaping of their own development through their activity preferences, friendship choices, etc.
• Some are stage theories, others emphasize continuity.

• **Selman’s stage-theory of role-taking**
• **Dodge’s Information Processing Theory of Social Problem Solving**

**Selman’s Stage Theory of Role Taking**
• **Role-taking**: the ability to take another person’s point of view.
• Children begin unaware of different perspectives, then become better understanding someone else’s perspective, comparing perspectives, and thinking from abstract perspectives.

**Dodge’s Information-Processing Theory of Social Problem Solving**
• Socialization as problem solving (encoding, interpreting social cues, establishing goals, strategies, evaluation of strategies)
Cognitive Theories on Gender Typing

- First, basic gender identity is established.
- Then, children look for same-sex models and information on how to behave according to gender.
  - Children learn what is for boys vs. girls
  - Attend more to things for their own gender.

Supporting evidence?
Shortcomings?

Ecological Theories

- Emphasizes environmental and evolutionary factors.
- Continuous development.

- **Bioecological Model**
  - Active child

- **Ethological and Evolutionary Theories**
  - Passive child
Ethological and Evolutionary Theories

- Looks at the evolutionary bases of behavior, with a focus on the adaptive or survival value of behavior
  - *Evolutionary Psychology* - during the evolution of a species certain genes predispose individuals to behave in a way that increases survival, mating, and reproduction. These genes are passed on.
Evolutionary Psychology on Gender Typing

- Emphasize biological basis of gender-roles.
- Hormonal influences during fetal stage/adolescence.
- Males benefit from rowdy, competitive, active, aggressive behavior. Males need spatial navigation skills.
- Females benefit from nurturing, communal behavior.

Supporting Evidence?
Shortcomings?

A unified view?