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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