

New Research in Psychological Science

July 31, 2015

Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

[Genes Unite Executive Functions in Childhood](#)

Laura E. Engelhardt, Daniel A. Briley, Frank D. Mann, K. Paige Harden, and Elliot M. Tucker-Drob

Research has shown that the covariation among abilities in different executive function (EF) domains — represented by a higher-order factor — is almost 100% heritable in adults; however, it is not known whether this genetic influence is in place in childhood. Third- through eighth-graders who were part of the Texas Twin Project — a registry of twins and triplets living in the U.S. state of Texas — were assessed for individual differences in the EF domains of inhibition, switching, working memory, and updating. The researchers found that although some nonshared environmental influences accounted for variance unique to the individual EF domains, a common EF factor was 100% heritable. These findings provide insight into the way EF abilities develop over time and may offer researchers and practitioners a way to identify children at risk for future maladaptive EF-related outcomes.

[Intra- Versus Intersex Aggression: Testing Theories of Sex Differences Using Aggression Networks](#)

Ralf Wölfer and Miles Hewstone

Research consistently finds that men are more aggressive than women. Two theories — sexual-selection theory and social-role theory — seek to explain this difference; however, they do so in different ways. Researchers collected information on inter- and intrasex aggression, social hierarchy, gender and masculinity beliefs, and information on body dimorphism and reproductive competition from more than 11,000 14-year-old schoolchildren. Factors related to sexual-selection theory, such as male hierarchy and the proportionality of boys in the classroom, best explained male-biased intrasex aggression, whereas factors related to social-role theory, such as gender beliefs, best explained male-biased intersex aggression. These findings highlight the usefulness of a dual-theory framework for understanding gender differences in both inter- and intrasex aggression.

[Lady in Red: Hormonal Predictors of Women's Clothing Choices](#)

Adar B. Eisenbruch, Zachary L. Simmons, and James R. Roney

Recent studies have suggested that women are more likely to wear red or pink clothing on high-fertility days of their menstrual cycle; in many cases, however, these studies have been criticized for using error-prone counting methods to determine women's menstrual phases. In the current study, the researchers used saliva samples to assess fluctuations in women's hormone cycles that were related to fertility. The researchers assessed the color of women's clothing at four time points spaced 1 week apart. Women

were found to be more likely to wear red on fertile days, a relationship that was accounted for by women's progesterone-to-estradiol ratio, mirroring previous results on the relationship between color and fertility in women