

Scarr's Presidential Symposium Takes on Genetics and Personality

January 01, 1997

How can it be that happiness is more genetically than environmentally variable? Are leaders born and not reared?

Are socially retiring people born to be shy? Is love of sky-diving and driving a Harley-Davidson a personality trait with physiological bases? Do social attitudes, such as authoritarianism, vary more with genes than with experience? Can specific genes be identified that are responsible for genetic contributions to personality? These and related questions will be the topic of the Presidential symposium this year. Organized by APS President Sandra Scarr, it brings together surprising and important recent research on genetic and biological bases of variation in personality.

Studies of individual differences in personality, life events, and social attitudes, conducted in samples of biologically related and adoptive families and separated and reared-together twins, will be presented by major investigators in behavior genetics at the symposium May 24, 1997.

Evolutionary theory as a context for personality variation and research on specific genetic markers will make the symposium even more broadly interesting to the APS membership.