



Colorado Adoption Project

Research Project Highlights:

- The CAP has been ongoing for 28 years, making it the longest running adoption study of its kind in the world.
- 2,600 NNSD interviews have been conducted since we started the NNSD phone interview in 1999.
- 1,450 participants in the project (including siblings and parents) have completed at least one NNSD interview with us.
- Over 150 research articles have been published using CAP data.

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Timing and Life Choices

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a critical period of life development. It is the stage of life devoted to making decisions that have a major impact on the rest of the life course. During this transition, individuals decide how far to go in school, what career to pursue, whom to marry (or not marry), and whether or not to have children. For each individual, the timing of these decisions is based on a wide variety of factors. A primary focus of our research is to understand the genetic and environmental influences that effect how and when people make important life decisions.

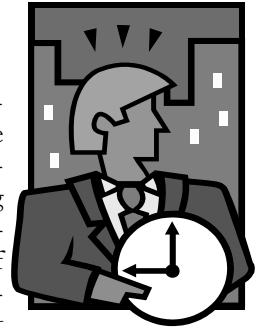
The NNSD (Nature and Nurture in Social Demography) telephone interview is designed to measure the reasons for and impacts of individual choices. By comparing answers between family members and peers of similar ages and backgrounds, researchers are learning which behaviors, choices, and attitudes are a result of the environment, which are passed down in the genes, and which are a combination of the two.



The NNSD is a telephone interview designed to help us understand how genes and environment might influence life choices during transitions throughout adulthood. The telephone interview itself ranges from 1/2 hour to 1 1/2 hours depending on the type of interview (there are currently 6 different NNSD interviews).

A researcher will contact you over the phone to set up an interview. During the interview, questions will

Using information from the first three years of NNSD data collection, we are finding some interesting differences between groups of participants. For example, we have found that female participants are more likely to attend or graduate from a four year college than male participants (49% to 38%). Are the men choosing to attend school later, or not attend at all? Will delaying college cause other adult decisions to be delayed as well? And what environmental, social and genetic factors are influencing this trend? Time will tell as we continue to learn from your answers over the next several years.



The NNSD research project is unique in that it is one of the first ever to combine the fields of behavioral genetics and social demography to examine the timing of individual choices and how these choices shape adult experiences. We hope that you find the interviews enjoyable, and know that your continued help is extremely valuable to this area of science. We really appreciate all your time and effort, and look forward to talking with you soon!

NNSD Interview: What to Expect

cover a range of topics including family, friends, religion, relationships and your views on various social issues. Compensation for your participation ranges from \$20 to \$65 depending on the type of interview.

Currently, we are conducting NNSD interviews with all CAP participants over 18, including siblings and parents who have not participated in the project for a while. So far we have had an excellent participation rate, and we would like to thank all of you who have continued to share your time and life experience with the CAP.

University of Colorado

Colorado Adoption Project
Institute for Behavioral Genetics
1480 30th St
447 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309

Phone: 303-492-7991
Fax: 303-735-2741
Email: johnsoab@colorado.edu

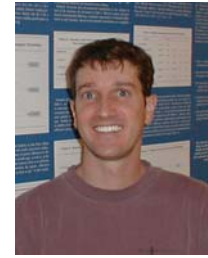
Research Staff



Sally Ann Rhea
Project Supervisor



Annie Johnson
Data Manager



Dan Ryan
Project Manager

Telephone Testers



Andy



Margaret



Donna



Lauren



Patricia



Behavioral Genetics: Mapping our Inner Surroundings



For centuries explorers have mapped the world around us in order to gain knowledge and understanding of the complex place we inhabit. With advances in technology, scientists have been increasingly able to map our inner surroundings as well. In 2000, the first complete map of the human genome was created. This map charts the location of all the genes that make up a human being, around 35,000 in all. Variations in these genes contribute to differences in our physical attributes and behavior. However, researchers are just beginning to find out what many of these genes do. The field of behavioral genetics is at the forefront of this search, and the results from your tests are helping us discover many exciting new aspects of human development and behavior.

Behavioral genetics is the study of genetic and environmental factors that create behavioral differences among individuals¹. This is the classic nature (genetics) vs. nurture (environment) debate. Researchers are finding that instead of “vs.” however, it would be more appropriate to say “nature **and** nurture”, as different combinations of genetics and environment make us who we are, it is not strictly one or the other.

Currently, researchers in behavioral genetics are focused on 1) finding behaviors and traits that are associated with specific genes and groups of genes, and 2) discovering how genes interact with the environment to make us each unique individuals. In order to find these connections, projects such as this one are being conducted around the world. Data about emotional, mental, and physical traits are collected through questionnaires and interviews, and DNA is collected through blood or saliva in order to match certain behaviors with certain genes. Researchers have begun pinpointing the functions of many genes, including those involved with reading disabilities, addictive behaviors, sleep, and memory.

This is an exciting time in the field of behavioral genetics, and your contribution to our understanding of the human experience is invaluable. Thank you again for your continued participation as we fill in the map of our inner surroundings.

1. Plomin, R. (1996) Nature and Nurture: An Introduction to Human Behavioral Genetics. Wadsworth Publishing. pg. 4