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TITLE: Genetic influence on Secure Attachment Depends on Socioeconomic Status

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ABSTRACT: Attachment behavioral systems are formed in childhood, persist over the lifespan, and correlate with socioeconomic status (SES; van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2013). While attachment can be attributed, in part, to genetic causes of variation (Matheny & Finkel, 2000), no twin studies have considered whether SES moderates heritability of attachment systems. Understanding how attachment heritability is moderated by SES may provide insight in maximizing children's genetic potential for secure attachment. We predicted greater heritability in children from high SES families than in low SES families, as would be predicted by social enhancement models. Data were drawn from the Louisville Twin Study and included 161 pairs of 19- and 25-month-

old twin pairs (MZ = 71, DZ = 90). Trained observers coded infants' attachment behavior (secure vs. insecure) in a modified Strange Situation paradigm. SES scores were created using head of household occupation (range: 0-100) with higher scores indicating higher job prestige. Gene-environment interaction models were fit to the data to test differences in heritability of attachment style across SES. Heritability of attachment was greater in children from high SES families than low SES families. Results suggest that improvement in SES may increase children's genetic expression of their attachment styles.

Finkel D & Matheny AP. (2000). Genetic and environmental influences on a measure of infant attachment security. *Twin Res*, 0, 242–250.

van IJzendoorn MH & Bakermans-Kranenburg MJ. (2010). Invariance of adult attachment across gender, age, culture, and socioeconomic status? *J Soc Pers Rel*, 27(2), 200–208.

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