

Glossary Of Significant Concepts In Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PARTheory)

Ronald P. Rohner

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Note: All entries in this glossary are implicitly prefaced by the phrase, "In PARTheory, the defined concept refers to" Some of the concepts may be defined differently in other theoretical paradigms. See the References at the end of the Glossary to discover how each concept fits into PARTheory. Concepts written in bold type within a definition are centrally important to that concept, and are defined elsewhere in the Glossary.

Acceptance-- The warmth, affection, care, comfort, concern, nurturance, support, or simply love that parents can feel and express toward their children. It has two principle expressions: physical and verbal. Physical expressions of parental acceptance include hugging, fondling, caressing, approving glances, kissing, smiling and other such indications of endearment, approval, or support. Expressions of verbal acceptance include praising, complimenting, saying nice things to or about the child, perhaps singing songs or telling stories to a young child, and the like. (See [rejection](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Acceptance-rejection syndrome--A relational diagnosis composed of two complementary sets of factors. First, four classes of behaviors appear universally to convey the symbolic message that "my parent. . ." (or other attachment figure)". . . loves me" (or does not love me--i.e., rejects me). These classes of behavior include perceived warmth/affection (or its opposite, coldness/lack of affection), hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, and undifferentiated rejection. Second, the psychological adjustment of children and adults (defined by a constellation of seven specific personality dispositions) tends universally to vary directly with the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to be accepted or rejected in their relationship with the people most important to them. (See [syndrome](#).)

Affection-- Observable behaviors that result when parents act on their feelings of [warmth](#) or love. Parental affection can be shown either physically (hugging, kissing, caressing, comforting, and the like) or verbally (praising, complimenting, saying nice things to or about the child, and so forth). These and many other caring, nurturing, supportive, loving, behaviors help define the behavioral expressions of parental [acceptance](#).

Aggression-- Any behavior where there is the intention of hurting someone, something, or oneself. It is differentiated into physical, verbal, and symbolic forms. Physical aggression includes hitting, biting, pushing, shaking, pinching, scratching, burning, tying up, and the like. Verbal aggression, on the other hand, includes sarcasm, belittling, cursing, scapegoating, denigrating, and saying other thoughtless, unkind, cruel things to or about the person. Symbolic aggression includes the use of angry or rude hand gestures or facial expressions. Aggression is to be distinguished from [assertiveness](#). (See [hostility](#); [personality theory](#); [problems with the management of hostility and aggression](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Anthroponomy-- The newly emerging science of human behavior that searches for worldwide principles (i.e., [universals](#)) of human behavior--that is, principles of behavior and of human development that can be shown empirically to hold true for people everywhere regardless of differences in culture, race, language, ethnicity, gender, and other such defining conditions. [PARTheory](#) and research illustrate the anthroponomical endeavor. (See [universalist approach](#); [phylogenetic perspective](#); [phylogenetic model](#).)

Anxiety-- Diffuse, often unfocused fear frequently evoked by the disruption or threatened disruption of an individual's relationship with a [significant other](#) (e.g. with a [parent](#) for the child). (See [personality subtheory](#); [psychological adjustment](#).)

Assertiveness-- Individuals' attempts to place themselves in physical, verbal, or social equality with, or superiority over another person. When one does this with the intent of hurting someone else, then the act becomes one of [aggression](#). But generally, assertiveness is to be distinguished from aggression.

Attachment figure-- Any person with whom a child or adult has a relatively long-lasting emotional bond, who is uniquely important to an individual, and who is interchangeable with no one else. That is, an attachment figure is a [significant other](#). But an attachment figure has at least one additional criterion not included in the definition of significant other. That criterion is the seeking or yearning for emotional closeness that if found "would result in feeling secure and comfortable in relation to the partner" (Ainsworth, 1989, p.711). As with all affectional bonds--such as those felt for significant others and attachment figures--individuals are likely to feel the need to establish at least periodic physical closeness or proximity to their partner, experience "distress upon inexplicable separation, pleasure or joy upon reunion, and grief at loss..."(Ainsworth, 1989, p.711).

Behavior observations (BOs)-- One of the [procedures](#) along with the interview ([PARIS](#)), and self-report questionnaires ([PARQ](#)), available to assess parents' accepting and rejecting behaviors--or individuals' perceptions of these behaviors.

Biological state-- Refers in the [phylogenetic perspective](#) and the [phylogenetic model](#), to the complete range of genetic dispositions (see [genotype](#)) found in populations throughout our species. It also includes biological structure and processes of the living body, for example the nervous system, the endocrine system, and our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. From a developmental point of view, biological state is more or less synonymous with maturation or organismic growth. Overall, then, "biological state" is humankind's complete biological, including genetic, endowment.

Cognition-- Mental activity including the capacity to know, comprehend, understand, reason, and remember. (See [mental representation](#); [phylogenetic model](#))

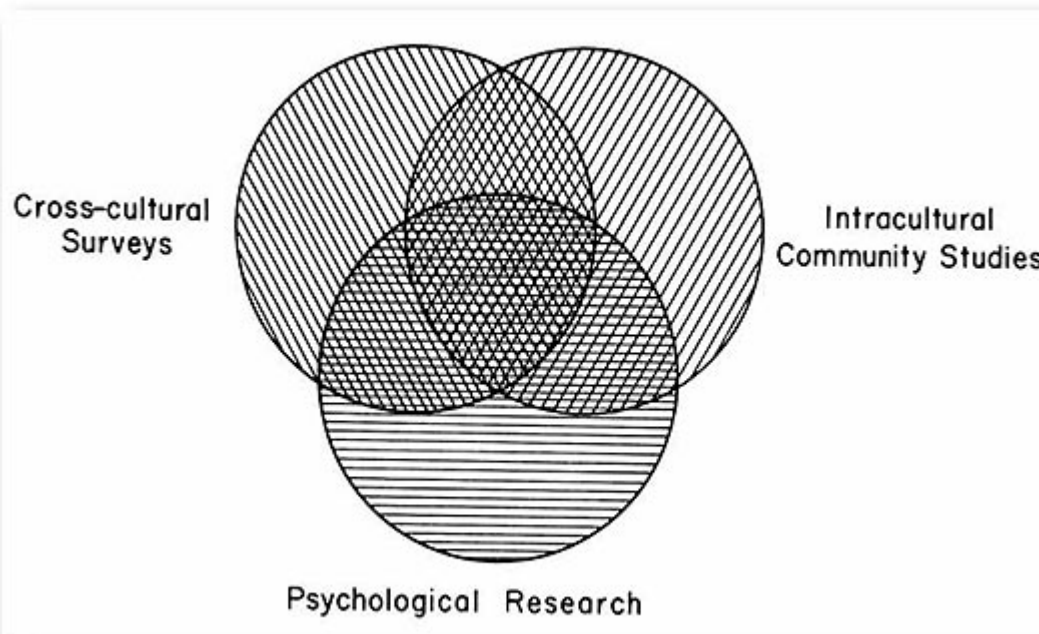
Coldness-- On the warmth/affection scale of the [warmth dimension of parenting](#) refers to the lack or absence (or perceived absence) of emotional [warmth](#). (See [rejection](#))

Community study approach-- Refers in the anthropomical research design of [PARTheory](#) to long-term ethnographic research within a given community in order to place styles of parenting and other relevant behaviors within their full sociocultural context. (See [convergence of methodologies and procedures](#); [anthroponomy](#); [multimethod research strategy](#); [universalist approach](#))

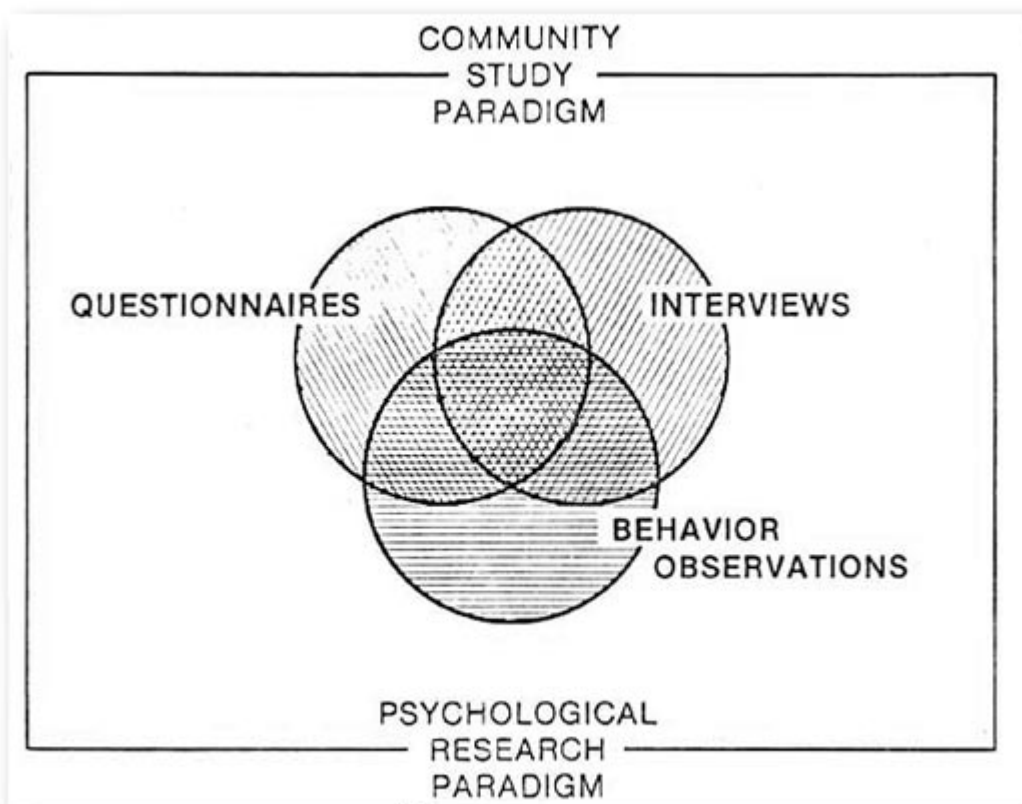
Control dimension of parenting-- A continuum of parenting defined at one pole by [permissiveness](#) and at the other by [restrictive control](#). Intermediate between these poles are [moderate control](#) and [firm control](#), which are sometimes combined to form [flexible control](#). Conceptually, behavioral control has two components: (1) the extent to which parents place limits or restrictions on their children's behavior (i.e., the extent to which parents use directives requiring compliance, make demands, and establish family or household rules). Behavioral control also pertains to (2) the extent to which parents insist on compliance with these proscriptions and prescriptions. The concept of parental control does not refer to the methods or techniques parents use to enforce compliance with their proscriptions and prescriptions. This latter issue deals with styles of parental discipline (e.g., [physical punishment](#)). In [PARTheory](#) research behavioral control is measured most often by scores on the control scale of the [PARQ/Control](#).

Convergence of methodologies and procedures-- The areas of overlap or convergence of results across two or more discrete [methodologies](#) or [procedures](#), as displayed in the Figures below. (See [anthroponomy](#); [multimethod research strategy](#); [universalist approach](#))

Convergence of Methodologies



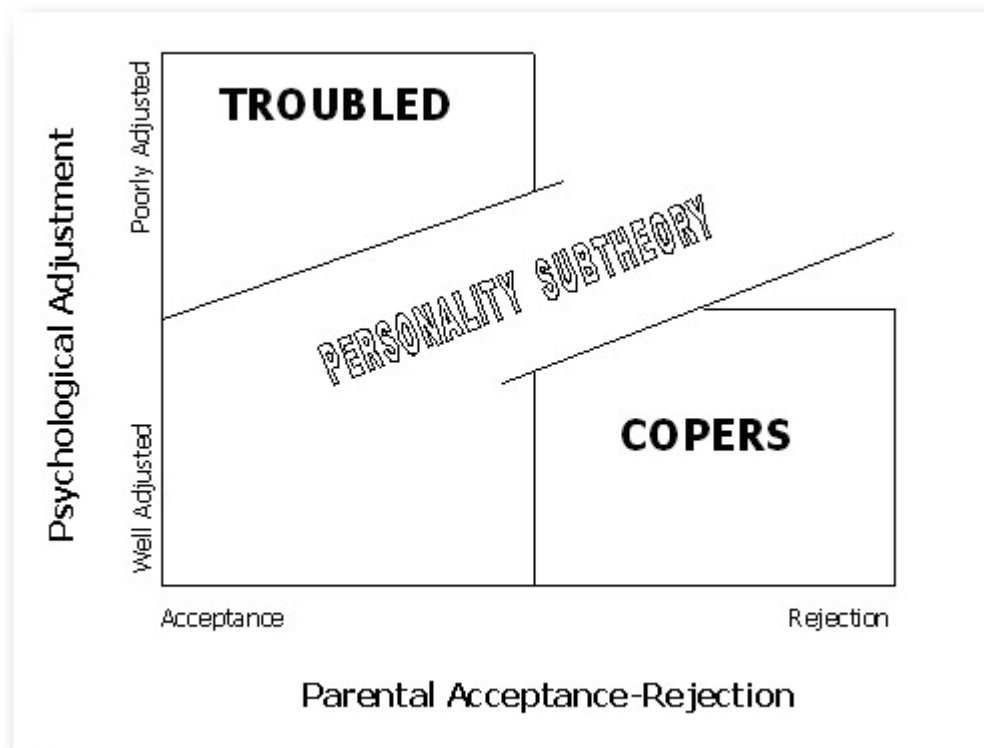
Convergence of Procedures



Copers, affective-- Those people whose emotional and overall mental health is reasonably good despite having been raised by rejecting parents. Affective copers are able to escape most but not all of the pernicious psychological effects of rejection as specified in **PARTheory's** [personality subtheory](#). (See [copers, instrumental](#).)

Copers, instrumental-- Rejected persons who do well in their professions, occupations, and other task-oriented activities, but whose emotional and overall mental health is impaired as defined in **PARTheory's** [personality subtheory](#). These individuals maintain high levels of task competence and occupational performance despite living with the expectable psychological consequences of parental rejection. (See [copers, affective](#).)

Coping subtheory-- One of the three subtheories of [PARTheory](#). It addresses the question: What gives some children and adults the resilience to cope more effectively than most with the experiences of perceived rejection?



Counter rejection-- The situation where rejected individuals (e.g., adolescents) reject the other person in turn (e.g., the rejecting parent). Counter rejection appears to occur most often in the context of [defensive independence](#). (See [personality subtheory](#).)

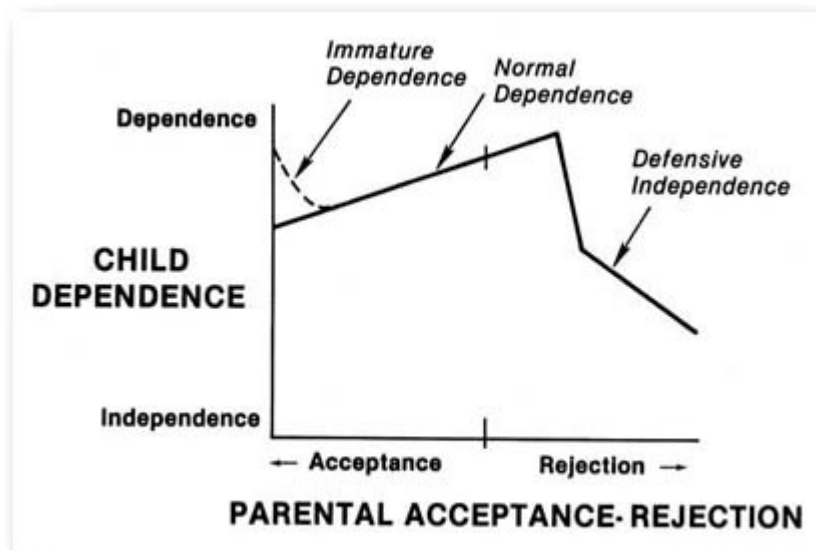
Culture-- Equivalent and complementary *meanings* approximately shared by many members of a society or by identifiable segments of the society (e.g., status groups), and generally transmitted from one generation to the next. (Note: this definition and concepts within it are amplified in Rohner, 1984.) The important point here is that the concept "culture" in [PARTheory](#) refers exclusively to some degree of *consensus* about symbolic *meanings* among members of a population. The concept does not include

behavior except insofar as behavior is motivated by or expresses symbolic meanings. (See [culture learning](#); [enculturation](#); [equivalence of meaning](#); [mental representation](#).)

Culture learning-- The process through which one becomes a responsible adult member of a given society, as defined by the norms of that society. (See [anthroponomy](#); [enculturation](#); the [universalist approach](#).)

Defensive independence-- The commonplace tendency for seriously rejected persons to make fewer and fewer bids over time for [positive response](#) (see [dependence](#)) because of their growing anger and increasing emotional unresponsiveness. Many defensively independent persons say, in effect, "To hell with you! I don't need you. I don't need anybody!" Defensive independence is one way many rejected persons attempt to defend themselves against further hurt of rejection in situations over which they feel they have little control. Defensive independence is like healthy [independence](#) in that individuals make relatively few behavioral bids for positive response. But it is unlike healthy independence in that defensively independent people continue to emotionally crave positive response, though they sometimes do not recognize it. Indeed, because of the overlay of anger, distrust, and other negative emotions generated by chronic rejection, defensively independent individuals often actively deny their need for support, encouragement, sympathy, love, and other forms of positive response. (See [personality subtheory](#).)

Dependence-- The internal, psychologically felt wish or yearning for emotional (vs. instrumental or task oriented) support, care, comfort, attention, nurturance, and similar responses from [significant others](#). Dependence in PARTheory also refers to the actual behavioral bids individuals make for such responsiveness. For young children these bids may include clinging to parents, whining or crying when parents unexpectedly depart, and seeking physical proximity with them when they return. Older children and adults may express their need for positive response more symbolically --especially in times of distress-- by seeking reassurance, approval, or support, as well as comfort, affection, or solace from people who are important to them--particularly from parents for youths, and from nonparental significant others for adults. Dependence in [PARTheory](#) is construed as a continuum, with [independence](#) defining one end of the continuum and dependence the other. (See [personality subtheory](#).)



Emotional responsiveness-- Persons' ability to express freely and openly their emotions. Emotional responsiveness is revealed by the spontaneity and ease with which a person is able to respond emotionally to another person, the extent to which the individual--adult or child--feels comfortable forming warm, intimate, involved, lasting, and non-defensive attachments with other people, attachments that are

untroubled by emotional wariness, constriction, or lack of trust. The interpersonal relationships of emotionally responsive people tend to be close and personal, and such people have little trouble responding to the friendship advances of others. In contrast, emotionally unresponsive people are emotionally insulated from others. They have restricted and often only defensive emotional involvement with others. They may, however, be sociable and friendly, but friendliness is not to be confused with the ability to enter into intimate relationships. Some people who are friendly are incapable of having intimate, involved, non-defensive relationships; their relationships tend to be non-personal and somewhat distant emotionally. (See [personality subtheory](#).)

Emotional stability-- Individuals' steadiness of mood, their ability to withstand minor setbacks, failures, difficulties, and other stresses without becoming upset emotionally. Emotionally stable persons tolerate minor stresses and strains of day to day living without becoming emotionally upset, anxious, nervous, tense, or angry. They are able to maintain composure under minor emotional stress. They are fairly constant in their basic mood, and they generally revert quickly to that state following those occasions when they have experienced great stress or have been exceptionally provoked. The unstable person, on the other hand, is subject to fairly wide, frequent, and often unpredictable mood shifts that may swing from pole to pole. (See [personality sub theory](#).)

Enculturation-- The process of learning to become a responsible adult member of a society as defined by the norms of that society. (See [culture learning](#).)

Equivalence of meaning-- Refers to qualitatively different symbolic behaviors that share essentially the same underlying meaning. For example (1) receiving a peeled and segmented orange from a parent in West Bengal has much the same symbolic meaning as verbally praising a child in North America; (2) hissing at a woman in St. Kitts, West Indies is roughly equivalent to giving a wolf-whistle in the U. S.--both behaviors express a man's sexual admiration for a woman. In cross-cultural and multi-ethnic studies of parental acceptance-rejection one must strive to be sensitive to issues regarding the equivalence of meaning. (See [culture](#).)

Experience-- Refers in the [phylogenetic perspective](#) and the [phylogenetic model](#) to anything that individuals perceive or anything to which they react as living organisms. It includes experiences with the physical world, the social or interpersonal world, and very importantly, with oneself, including one's inner world. Also included in the concept of experience is a person's total history of experiences, probably from the moment of conception but certainly from birth onward. It also includes the kinds of experiences called "learning," including [culture learning](#). (See [culture](#).)

Expressive behaviors-- Refer in the sociocultural systems model to beliefs and behaviors of individuals that express or reflect their internal psychological states. For example, why do some people prefer simplicity in art whereas others prefer more complex art? Or, why do some believe God is harsh and punitive whereas others believe God is warm and loving--and others do not believe in God at all? These and many other expressive beliefs, preferences, and behaviors tend worldwide to be reliably associated with childhood experiences of parental acceptance-rejection. (See [sociocultural systems theory](#); [universals in human behavior](#).)

Firm control-- Conditions where parents exercise firm but not rigid or moment-by-moment control over children's behavior. Children's (often selfish) demands are effectively resisted. Parents exert firm control at times of parent-child disagreement, but do not hem in the child with many restrictions. Children's behavior is guided by regimen and parental intervention. (See the [control dimension of parenting](#).)

Flexible control-- The portion of the [control dimension of parenting](#) that includes [moderate control](#) and [firm control](#) (but excludes [permissiveness](#) and [restrictive control](#)).

Genotype-- The complete genetic endowment of the individual. (See [phylogenetic model](#); [phylogenetic perspective](#).)

Holocultural method-- A paradigm of research for testing hypotheses "by means of correlations found in a worldwide, comparative study whose units of study are entire societies or cultures, and whose sampling universe is either (a) all known cultures... or (b) all known primitive tribes" (Naroll, Michik, & Naroll, 1976).

Hostility-- An internal or emotional feeling of enmity, anger, or resentment. Hostility is a principal motivator of [aggression](#). (See [aggression](#); [personality subtheory](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Idiographic-- A focus on the unique, individual case (versus attempting to generalize to the larger class of which the case is an element). Idiographic contrasts with [nomothetic](#). PARTheory's anthropomorphical emphasis is nomothetic. (See [anthropomorphology](#); [universalist approach](#).)

Immature dependence-- High levels of parental warmth and affection combined with [intrusive parental control](#)--that is, moment-by-moment control over and manipulation of a child's behavior--are likely to produce an especially noticeable spiking in the dependency curve (see the Figure with [dependence](#)). That is, parents who continually say, in effect, "Oh, Honey, don't do that! You might hurt yourself. Let mommy do it for you," are likely to reinforce the child's dependency needs at the same time they interfere with the child's normal exploration and self-testing. Thus these children often do not develop a full sense of age-appropriate competence, mastery, and a realistic sense of their own limits. The parent reinforces an infantilizing form of dependency. In [PARTheory](#), the form of parenting producing this immature dependency is sometimes called [smother love](#) or "smother mothering." (See [dependence](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

Independence-- An individual's relative freedom from the felt-need for [positive response](#). That is, the independent person is one who does not often feel the need to rely on others for emotional support, encouragement, reassurance, comfort, and so forth. Emotionally healthy individuals are able to make these bids from time to time as needed. The important issue is how often and how intensely they feel the need for such positive response. Independence is distinguished in PARTheory from [self-reliance](#). (See [dependence](#); [defensive independence](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

Indeterminance in human behavior-- The view held in [PARTheory](#) that, by their very nature, human behavior and development are to some degree indeterminate and therefore probabilistic; they do not follow strict laws or forces such as those postulated in Newtonian physics. Rather, PARTheory postulates that mental activity (see [mental representation](#)) coordinates all human experience. That is, [experience](#) is given meaning through mental activity. Experience is thus susceptible to many interpretations. Individual variability in the interpretation of experience may be a major source of partial indeterminance of behavior and development. This variability in the interpretation of experience contributes to PARTheory's emphasis on a [phenomenological perspective](#). (See [culture](#); the [probability model](#); [universals in human behavior](#).)

Indifference-- An emotional state characterized by a lack of concern for or interest in an individual, or not really caring about that person. (See [neglect](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Insecurity-- Apprehensiveness and anxiousness evoked by the disruption or threatened disruption of an individual's relationship with a [significant other](#) or [attachment figure](#) (e.g., with a parent for the child). (See [personality subtheory](#); [psychological adjustment](#).)

Institutionalized expressive systems-- Refer in the [sociocultural systems model](#) (see Figure) to ubiquitous but essentially nonsurvival oriented features of a society such as a people's religious beliefs, artistic and musical traditions, their games, folklore, and the like. (See [culture](#); [expressive behaviors](#); [sociocultural systems sub theory](#).)

Intracultural variability-- The natural variation that occurs with respect to almost any given behavior, belief, or other human characteristic in a given sociocultural system. In PARTheory research--as in all anthropological investigations--one must examine intracultural variability as well as cross-cultural variability. (See [anthroponomy](#); [culture](#); [universalist approach](#))

Intrusive control-- A form of control (usually firm or restrictive) where parents intrude into the child's activities without regard to the child's feelings or needs. Intrusive control tends to be motivated more by the parent's own personal needs or wishes than by a realistic need to monitor or control the child's actions. Intrusive or interfering parents impose their will on the child with little regard for the child's own emotional state or current activity. (See [control dimension of parenting](#) [immature dependence](#); [restrictive control](#))

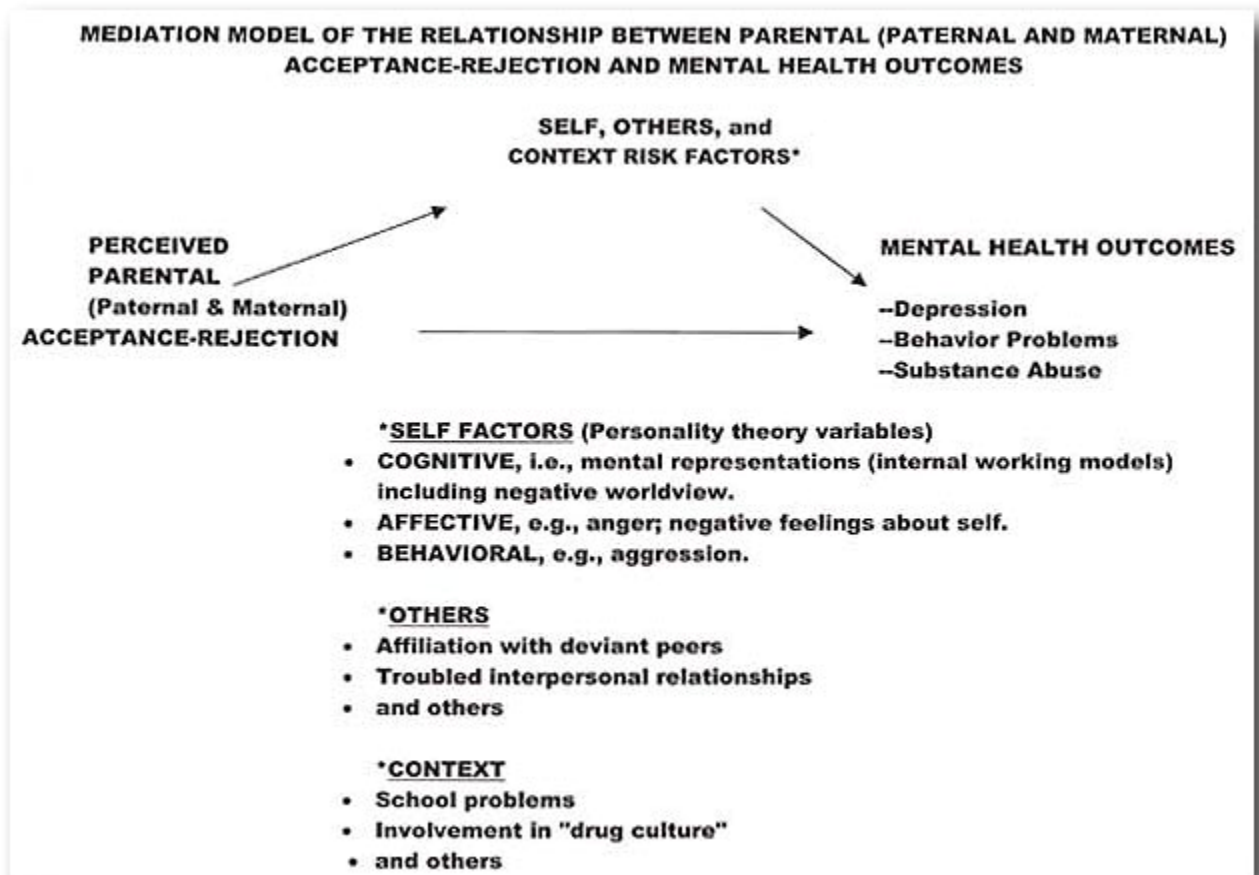
IPAR/CQ-- The Intimate Partner Acceptance-Rejection/Control Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) assessing adults' perceptions of their intimate partners' accepting-rejecting and controlling behaviors. Acceptance-rejection and control items on the IPAR/CQ are the same as on the adult Parental Acceptance-Rejection/Control Questionnaire. (See [PARQ/ Control](#))

IPAQ-- The Intimate Partner Attachment Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) assessing the nature and quality of adults' attachment relationships with their intimate partners. (See [attachment figure](#) ; [significant other](#))

Maintenance systems-- Refers in the [sociocultural systems model](#) (see Figure) to those features of a society that ensure the survival of the family and members of the community, and help maintain the integrity of the population in its physical and cultural sense. Illustrations of maintenance systems include: the way people make a living, ensure social control, and ensure the procreation and socialization of children. (See [culture](#) ; [sociocultural systems](#) [sub theory](#))

Mechanical model-- The belief (rejected in [PARTheory](#)) that human behavior is strictly ruleful, and that if the rules, mechanisms, or processes are fully understood, human behavior and development can be predicted with perfect fidelity. Mechanical model theories are typically stated in the at-least-implied form of invariants, constants, or absolutes. G. Stanley Hall's notions about the universality of adolescent stress, for example, illustrates this when he wrote about adolescence being universally and *inevitably* a period of storm and stress. Freud's notion about the universality and *inevitability* of the Oedipus complex (for the normal development of males) is a second illustration.

Mediation model-- The fact (as displayed in the Figure below) that perceived parental acceptance-rejection has both a direct and indirect effect on the development of mental health (and other) behavioral and developmental outcomes.



Mental representation-- An individual's more-or-less coherent but usually implicit theory of reality. The theory consists largely of generalizations about self, others, and the experiential world constructed from emotionally significant past and current [experience](#). Mental representations about a specific domain (e.g., beliefs and expectations about oneself, [significant others](#), [attachment figures](#), or interpersonal relationships) fall along at least three continua: (1) from being consciously recognized to being wholly unconscious, (2) from being internally consistent and organized to being inconsistent and perhaps chaotic, and (3) from being loosely or flexibly scripted to being tightly or rigidly ruleful. Along with one's emotional state--which both influences and is influenced by one's theory of reality-- mental representations tend to shape the way in which individuals perceive, construe, and react to new experiences, including interpersonal relationships. Once created, individuals' mental representations of self, of significant others, attachment figures, and of the world around them tend to induce them to seek or to avoid certain situations and kinds of people. (See [culture](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

Methodology-- A class or tradition of research; a research paradigm; a body of methods, postulates, and rules for doing a specific type of research. Illustrations of methodologies include the [holocultural method](#), the experimental method, and survey research. Methodology is to be distinguished from [procedure](#). (See [anthroponomy](#); [universalist approach](#); [convergence of methodologies](#).)

Moderate Control-- Conditions where parents make relatively few demands on children (e.g., for household responsibility or orderly behavior). Parents allow their children to regulate their own activities as much as possible, but within a few clearly defined and enforced limits. Parents avoid strict, unyielding control. (See [control dimension of parenting](#).)

Multimethod research strategy-- The need to employ a variety of discrete, unrelated research [procedures](#) and [methodologies](#) in anthropomical research in order to reduce or even eliminate the likelihood that the results achieved might be an artifact of the potential bias (i.e., systematic error) inherent in every measurement process. If the same results emerge across multiple but independent procedures and methodologies--each containing the potential for its own unique form of bias--then one can be reasonably confident the results are not an artifact of the measurements used. (See [anthroponomy](#); [convergence of methodologies and procedures](#); [universalist approach](#))

Multivariate model of behavior-- States that the behavior of the individual (e.g., a child's coping with perceived rejection) is a function of the interaction between self, other, and context. "Self" characteristics include the child's [mental representations](#) and other internal and external ([personality](#)) characteristics. "Other" characteristics include the personal characteristics of the loving or rejecting parent(s), along with the form, frequency, duration, and severity of such behaviors. "Context" characteristics include other significant persons in the child's life, along with social-situational characteristics of the child's environment. The multivariate model is often written in quasi-mathematical form: $B_I = f[SO_C]$. Where B_I refers to the behavior of the individual, f refers to "a function of," S refers to "self," O refers to "other," and C refers to "context." The parentheses indicate an interaction among elements within their bounds.

Neglect-- A condition where parents fail to attend appropriately to the physical, medical, educational, social, emotional, and other needs of the child. Often, neglecting parents pay little attention to children's needs for comfort, solace, help, or attention. And they may remain physically as well as [psychologically unavailable](#), unresponsive, or inaccessible to the child. (See [indifference](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Nomothetic-- An interest in or attempt to generalize about some phenomenon, for example the worldwide effects of perceived rejection. Nomothetic contrasts with [idiographic](#). (See [anthroponomy](#); [universalist approach](#).)

Parent-- Any person who has more or less long-term, primary caregiving responsibility for a child. This person may be a mother, father, grandparent, other relative, or even a non-kinsperson such as a foster parent or parent surrogate in an institutional setting. Parents are generally [attachment figures](#).

PAQ-- The Personality Assessment Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) designed to measure the seven [personality](#) dispositions most central to [personality subtheory](#). Two versions of the PAQ are available: Adult and Child. Collectively the seven dispositions are often used as an operational measure of an individual's [psychological adjustment](#) of the form predicted in personality subtheory to be associated universally with the experience of parental acceptance-rejection.

PARIS-- The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Interview Schedule is available in two versions, adult and child. This is one of the [procedures](#) available to assess parents' accepting and rejecting behaviors.

PARQ-- The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) assessing individuals' childhood (or infancy) experiences with parental acceptance and rejection. Four versions of the PARQ are available: (1)Adult, (2) Child, (3) Parent: Child version, and (4) Parent: Infant version.

PARQ/Control-- The Parental Acceptance-Rejection/Control Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) assessing two major dimensions of parenting: parental acceptance-rejection and parental control. (See [PARQ](#); [control dimension of parenting](#).)

PARTheory-- Parental acceptance-rejection theory (PARTheory) is a theory of socialization that attempts to predict and explain major causes, consequences, and correlates of parental acceptance and rejection within the U.S. and worldwide. It attempts to answer five classes of questions divided into three subtheories. Two classes of questions define PARTheory's [personality subtheory](#). A third class of

questions defines PARTheory's [coping sub theory](#). The last two classes of questions define PARTheory's [sociocultural systems subtheory](#) and [model](#). PARTheory is now being expanded to include interpersonal relationships beyond parent-child relationships. These relationships include intimate adult relationships and peer relationships. In all expansions, however, the focus is on the causes, affects, and other correlates of perceived acceptance-rejection.

Passive aggression-- Non-active forms of aggression such as pouting, passive obstructionism, sulking, stubbornness, and intentional procrastination when these behaviors are motivated by the intent of irritating or getting back at another person. (See [hostility](#); [aggression](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

Permissiveness-- Conditions where parents attempt to exercise only minimum control over the child's behavior. The rules, proscriptions, and prescriptions that parents impose on children include only the barest controls needed for safety and physical health. Sometimes little attempt is made to enforce the few rules or restrictions that do exist. Parents are non-directive about much of what the child does. These parents are willing to allow children to do things their own way. Decisions about the child are usually dependent on the child's own will, whim, or desires about the matter. (See the [control dimension of parenting](#).)

Personality-- An individual's more-or-less stable set of internally motivated predispositions to respond (i.e., affective, cognitive, perceptual, and motivational dispositions) and actual modes of responding (i.e., observable behaviors) in various life situations or contexts. These dispositions and behaviors usually have regularity and orderliness across time and space. (See [psychological adjustment](#).)

Personality subtheory-- One of the three subtheories of [PARTheory](#). Personality subtheory focuses on a constellation of personality dispositions that are postulated to characterize rejected children and adults the world over. These dispositions include [dependence](#), healthy [independence](#), and [defensive independence](#), depending on the degree and form of rejection; [emotional unresponsiveness](#); [hostility](#), [aggression](#), [passive aggression](#), or [problems with the management of hostility and aggression](#); negative [self-esteem](#); negative [self-adequacy](#); negative [worldview](#); and [emotional instability](#). Each of these personality dispositions falls on a continuum of "more" or "less." The seven personality dispositions in their "negative" expressions (e.g., emotional unresponsiveness) represent a constellation of interrelated and measurable characteristics that are predicted in personality subtheory to result from the experience of rejection in all sociocultural systems, races, and languages of the world. Additionally, PARTheory's personality subtheory postulates that rejected children are likely to experience [anxiety](#) and [insecurity](#) in their relationship with their rejecting parent(s). These two dispositions are not routinely assessed, however, because valid and reliable measures have not yet been found for use in multi-ethnic and international research.

Personalizing-- The act of reflexively or automatically and egocentrically relating life events to oneself, of inappropriately interpreting events primarily in terms of oneself, usually in a negative sense. People who are unable to depersonalize tend to interpret interpersonal encounters, and even accidental events, as having special and direct reference to themselves. That is, they tend to "take everything personally." According to PARTheory's [coping sub theory](#), the capacity to depersonalize provides a social-cognitive ([mental representation](#)) resource that allows rejected children and adults to psychologically process hurtful interpersonal interaction in a more benign way.

Phenomenological perspective-- [PARTheory's](#) greater (but not exclusive) emphasis on individuals' own perceptions or subjective appraisals of their parents' (or other [attachment figures](#)) accepting or rejecting behaviors than on outsiders' (e.g., researchers') appraisals of individuals' experiences. (See [indeterminance in human behavior](#); [probability model](#).)

Phylogenetic model-- Asserts that the behavior and development of an individual is a function in some unspecified way of the interaction between an individual's [biological state](#) and [experience](#) as modified by [cognition](#) or mental activity. The phylogenetic model is often symbolized by the quasi-formula $B_i = f[(B \times E)C]$, where B_i is the behavior of the individual; f is "a function of;" B is the individual's biological

state; E is experience, and; C is cognition or mental activity. The brackets and parentheses within brackets convey the idea of complex interactions among enclosed elements. (See [mental representation](#) ; [phylogenetic perspective](#).)

Phylogenetic perspective-- Asserts that the contemporary behavior and behavior-potential of the species Homo sapiens is a function in an as yet unspecified way of interactions over the millennia between humankind's [biological state](#) and [experience](#). The phylogenetic perspective is often symbolized by the quasi-formula $B_h = f(B \times E)$ where B_h is the behavior potential of humans, f is "a function of," B is biological state, and E is experience. The product symbol (\times) conveys the idea of an interaction between elements within the parentheses. In effect, this perspective recognizes and inextricable interaction between nature and nurture.

Physical punishment-- The direct or indirect infliction of physical discomfort or pain on a child by a person in a position of authority over the child (e.g., [parent](#)), usually for the purpose of (1) stopping a child's unwanted behavior, (2) preventing the recurrence of unwanted behavior, or (3) because the child failed to do something (s)he was supposed to do.

Positive response, need for-- PARTheory's [personality subtheory](#) begins with the probably untestable assumption that humans have developed over the course of evolution (see [phylogenetic perspective](#)) the enduring, biologically based emotional need for positive response from people most important to them. The need for positive response includes an emotional wish, desire, or yearning (whether consciously recognized or not) for comfort, support, care, concern, nurturance, and the like. In adulthood the need becomes more complex and differentiated to include the wish (recognized or unrecognized) for positive regard from people whose opinions are considered of value. People who can best satisfy this need are typically [parents](#) for infants and children, but include [significant others](#) and other [attachment figures](#) for adolescents and adults. When individuals act on the emotionally-felt need for positive response (e.g., for comfort, nurturance, support, or love) the resulting behavior is generally called [dependence](#).

PPQ The Physical Punishment Questionnaire is a self-report questionnaire ([procedure](#)) designed to assess individuals' (adults' and children's) perceptions of physical punishment experienced, or administered to a child. Three versions are available: adult, child, and parent.

Probability model-- The view that little in human behavior is absolutely fixed, constant, or invariant. Rather, any given behavior or other outcome has only varying degrees of likelihood (probability) of occurring under specific conditions. Part of the reason for this variability in behavioral (and developmental) outcomes --according to PARTheory--revolves around almost inevitable imperfections in theory and measurement. But it also revolves around the postulated fact that human behavior is to some degree inherently indeterminant (see [indeterminance in human behavior](#)). Unlike [mechanical model](#) theories, probability model theories (such as PARTheory) tend to be written in probabilistic language stating that "perceived parental rejection *tends* to be associated everywhere with (specific outcomes or antecedents)." (See [universals](#); [phylogenetic model](#).)

Problems with the management of hostility and aggression-- Conditions where individuals have psychological difficulty recognizing or dealing emotionally with their own feelings of anger, irritation, resentment, [hostility](#), or propensity toward [aggression](#). Problems with the management of hostility and aggression may be revealed in disguised or symbolic forms such as: worried preoccupation about one's own or others' imagined hostility; aggressive fantasies, daydreams, or night dreams, and; unusual interest in violent events or activities. (See [personality subtheory](#).)

Procedure-- A specific measurement process. That is, a procedure is a single assessment device or technique of data collection such as interviewing or the use of questionnaires. Each of these is a single, coherent, and integrated procedure for collecting information, and is to be distinguished from a [methodology](#). (See [universalist approach](#); [convergence of methodologies](#).)

Psychological adjustment-- Refers in [PARTheory](#) primarily but not exclusively to an individual's position on the composite of seven personality dispositions most central to [personality subtheory](#). Psychological adjustment is often measured (i.e., operationally defined) by an individual's total score on the Personality Assessment Questionnaire ([PAQ](#)).

Psychological unavailability-- A form of parental [neglect](#) where parents may be physically present, but do not give the child psychological access to them. The parents do not respond to the child or interact psychologically with him or her. They are inattentive to the child's requests for help when the child is in need. Such parental behaviors are sometimes motivated by [indifference](#) toward the child. (See the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Rejection-- Refers conceptually to the absence or significant withdrawal of warmth, affection, care, comfort, concern, nurturance, support, or simply love by [parents](#) and other [attachment figures](#) toward children and adults, and by the presence of a variety of physically and psychologically hurtful behaviors and emotions. Worldwide, rejection tends to take four principal forms: (1) emotional [coldness](#) and the absence or withdrawal of behaviorally expressed [affection](#); (2) [hostility](#) and [aggression](#); (3) [indifference](#) and [neglect](#); and, (4) [undifferentiated rejection](#). The terms parental acceptance and rejection tend to connote positive and negative behaviors, respectively. In everyday American English the phrase "parental rejection" implies bad parenting and sometimes even bad people. In cross-cultural and ethnic research, however, one must try hard not to make such value judgments. Rather, one should attempt to view the phrase as being *descriptive* of parents' and others' behavior, not judgmental or evaluative. This is because parents in about 25% of the world's societies tend to reject their children (as defined in PARTheory), though they generally behave in ways they regard as culturally appropriate. (See [acceptance](#); [culture](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Restrictive control-- Conditions where parents impose many-- sometimes moment-by-moment-- restrictions or rules (proscriptions and prescriptions) on the child in a wide variety of situations, and firmly enforce these rules, often by physical means if necessary. These parents often limit children's autonomy to try out their own skills or to behave on their own without parental interference or guidance. (See the [control dimension of parenting](#).)

Self-adequacy-- Judgments individuals make about their own competence or ability to meet the instrumental/task-oriented demands of day-to-day living. Feelings of positive self-adequacy imply that one views oneself as capable of dealing satisfactorily with problems; as a success or capable of success in the things one sets out to do; as self-assured, self-confident, and socially adequate. Feelings of negative self-adequacy, on the other hand, are feelings of incompetence, the perceived inability to meet day-to-day demands successfully. (See [self-evaluation](#); [self-esteem](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

Self-determination-- Refers to the extent to which individuals feel they have personal control or influence over important life events and their outcomes. A positive sense of self-determination is one of the social-cognitive ([mental representations](#)) dispositions postulated in [coping sub theory](#) to help many rejected persons cope more effectively than most with the experience of perceived rejection-- though one's sense of self-determination is itself likely to be affected by the experience of rejection (See [copers, affective](#)).

Self-esteem-- Refers to the global emotional judgment individuals make about themselves in terms of worth or value. Feelings of positive self-esteem imply that one likes oneself; that one approves of, accepts, and is comfortable with oneself; that one is rarely disappointed in oneself; and that one perceives oneself to be a person of worth and worthy of respect. Negative self-esteem, on the other hand, implies that one dislikes or disapproves of oneself; that one devalues oneself and sometimes feels inferior to others; that one perceives oneself to be a worthless person or worthy of condemnation. (See [self-evaluation](#); [self-adequacy](#); [personality theory](#).)

Self-evaluation-- Refers to the global judgment individuals tend to make about themselves. It has two principal expressions, as postulated in [personality subtheory](#). These are [self-esteem](#) and [self-adequacy](#).

Self-reliance-- An individual's relative freedom from feeling the need to rely on others for help with instrumental or task-oriented activities (vs. emotional reliance on [significant others](#) / [attachment figures](#)). In PARTheory self-reliance is distinguished from [independence](#).

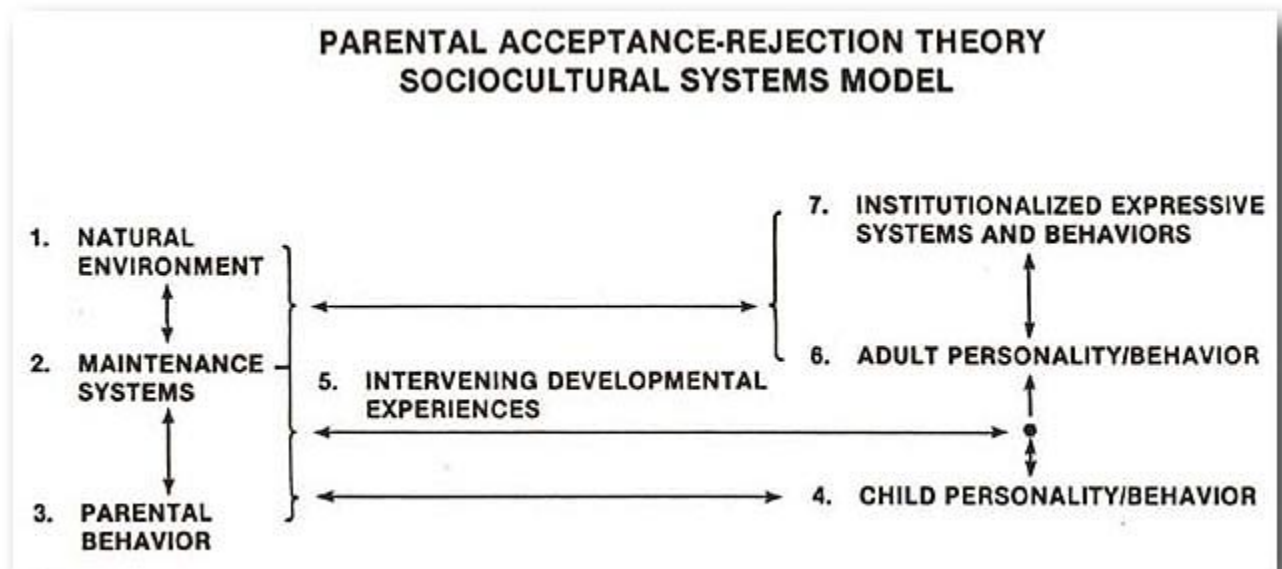
Sense of self-- Individuals' (e.g., young children's) relative awareness of their own individual personhood, internally (that is, distinguishing self from nonself, psychologically, as well as differentiating specific aspects of self from other aspects of self) as well as externally (that is, distinguishing self from nonself as a physical organism). In the course of normal development children gain over time an increasing awareness of self, the world, and relationships. At any given age some children have a more differentiated sense of self than do others. [Coping sub theory](#) postulates that the more aware children are of themselves (physically and psychologically) as distinct from others (e.g., parents) and all that is not self, the greater the potential they have for being able to distinguish negative/rejecting messages given by parents from messages that children give themselves. This social-cognitive ([mental representation](#)) capacity is thought to provide a resource for helping children cope more effectively than most with the destructive effects of perceived rejection. (See [coping, affective](#).)

Sensitive period-- A developmental period of heightened vulnerability or sensitivity to the effects of perceived parental rejection, probably from about 18 months up to about adolescence. (See [personality subtheory](#).)

Significant other-- Any person with whom a child or adult has a relatively long-lasting emotional tie, who is uniquely important to the individual, and who is interchangeable with no one else. (See also [attachment figure](#).)

Smother love-- The form of parenting where caregivers intrude (often inappropriately) in an apparently loving but excessively controlling, manipulative way into the child's activities. The child is often smothered with infantilizing, affectionate control, producing a tendency toward [immature dependence](#) in the child. (See the dependency curve illustrated under [dependence](#).)

Sociocultural systems model-- A graphic framework to guide conceptual thinking about the antecedents, consequences, and correlates of parental acceptance-rejection within individuals and within total sociocultural systems. (See [culture](#); [sociocultural systems sub theory](#).)



Sociocultural systems subtheory-- One of three subtheories in [PARTheory](#). This subtheory attempts to explain and predict major worldwide causes of parental acceptance-rejection. The subtheory also attempts to explain and predict major [institutionalized expressive system](#) correlates and individual [expressive behavior](#) correlates of parental acceptance-rejection. (See [sociocultural systems model](#))

Species specific-- A phenomenon that is unique to a given species of animal, and to only that species. Species specific is distinguished in PARTheory from [species wide](#). The effects of perceived parental rejection are postulated in PARTheory to be [species wide](#), but not necessarily [species specific](#).

Species wide-- A phenomenon that is characteristic of an entire species. For example the song of a specific species of bird, or in [PARTheory](#) the postulated effects of perceived [rejection](#). To be species wide is not necessarily to be [species specific](#). (See [anthroponomy](#); [PARTheory](#))

Syndrome-- A pattern of behaviors, traits, or dispositions that occur together and that characterize a particular disorder or condition (see [acceptance-rejection syndrome](#)). Any single disposition may be found in other conditions. It is the full configuration of dispositions that compose the syndrome.

Troubled individuals-- Those persons who are psychologically distressed or maladjusted in ways characteristic of rejected individuals despite being raised in warm and loving (accepting) families. (See Figure associated with [coping sub theory](#))

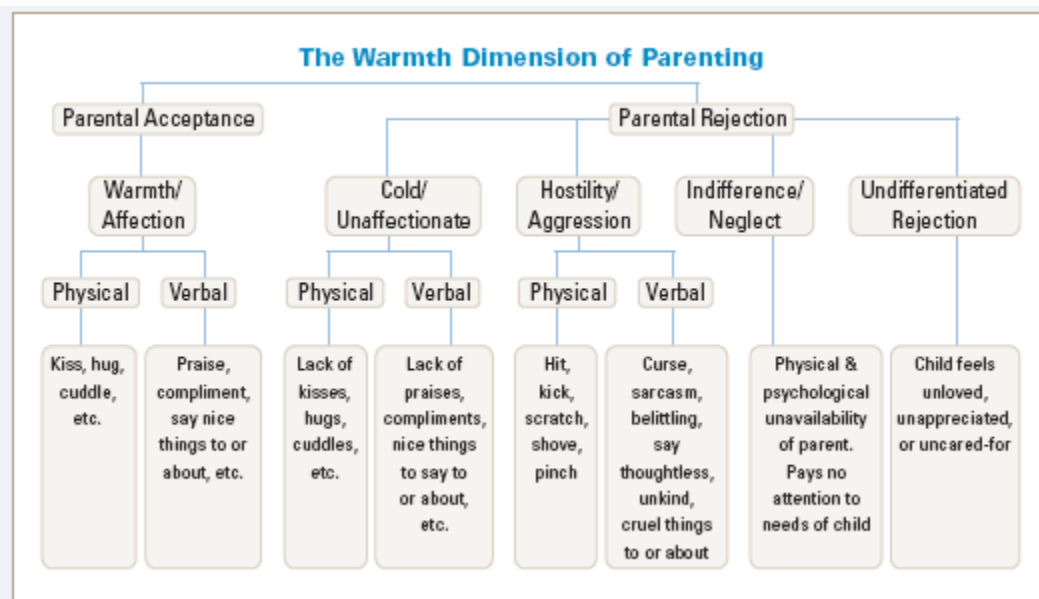
Undifferentiated rejection-- Individuals' affectively charged belief that their parents do not really care about them, want them, or love them, but where clear behavioral indicators may be absent that the parents are neglecting, unaffectionate, or aggressive toward them. (See the [warmth dimension of parenting](#))

Universalist approach-- Addresses the methodological question: If one is serious about establishing [universals](#) in human behavior, how does one go about doing it? In serving the interests of [anthroponomy](#), the universalist approach generally requires (1) a [multimethod research strategy](#) (looking for the convergence of results across disparate [methodologies](#) and [procedures](#)), and; (2) an adequate worldwide, cross-cultural sampling of all races, languages, ethnic groups, genders, and other significant variations relevant to the issue investigated. (See [convergence of methodologies and procedures](#))

Universals-- Scientifically derived principles of human behavior and human development that can be shown empirically to generalize across our species (see [species wide](#)) under specified conditions wherever they occur. Universals have a high probability of occurring but are not necessarily invariant or constant throughout our species. (See [anthroponomy](#); [probability model](#); [species wide](#); [universalist approach](#).)

Warmth-- The emotional (vs. behavioral) experience of caring, nurturance, concern, or simply love of one person (e.g., a parent) for another (e.g., a child). (See [affection](#); the [warmth dimension of parenting](#).)

Warmth dimension of parenting-- A continuum of parenting defined at one end by (perceived) parental [acceptance](#) and at the other end by (perceived) parental [rejection](#). All humans can be placed (or place themselves) somewhere along this continuum. The warmth dimension has to do with the quality of the affectional bond between parents and their children, and with the physical and verbal behaviors parents use to express their feelings. The warmth dimension of parenting must be distinguished from parental [warmth](#) per se on the warmth/affection scale below.



Worldview-- A person's (often un verbalized) overall evaluation of life, the universe, or the very essence of existence as being essentially positive or negative. A person with a positive worldview sees life as basically good, secure, friendly, happy, or unthreatening, or having some other positive valence. For a person with a negative world view, on the other hand, life is seen as essentially bad, insecure, threatening, unpleasant, hostile, uncertain, and/or full of many dangers. Worldview, then, is a judgment individuals make about the quality of existence. It is not to be confused with one's empirical knowledge of social, economic, political, or other events. (See [mental representation](#); [personality subtheory](#).)

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