

Children show preference for lucky people

November 7 2006

U.S. psychologists have determined children as young as five to seven years of age prefer lucky individuals over less fortunate people.

The Harvard University and Stanford University researchers say that phenomenon might clarify the origins of human attitudes toward differing social groups and help explain the persistence of social inequality.

"The hand of fate touches us all: Hurricanes strike some houses and spare others, lotteries are won and lost, and children are born into wealthy and poor families," said lead author Kristina Olson, a Harvard graduate student in psychology. "We set out to study how children make sense of random events, such as Hurricane Katrina, and how they feel about the people affected by such random events.

"Understanding how children think about others who experience luck or misfortune can provide a window into the origins of attitudes and preferences toward social groups that vary in privilege," she added.

The work by Olson, along with co-authors Mahzarin Banaji and Elizabeth Spelke of Harvard and Carol Dweck of Stanford University, appears in the latest issue of the journal *Psychological Science*.

Copyright 2006 by United Press International

Citation: Children show preference for lucky people (2006, November 7) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-11-children-lucky-people.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.