

## Musical accomplishment depends on genes and environment

Mom or dad may have driven you to cello rehearsal all those years, but you can also thank your genes for pushing you to practice, according to new research led by a Michigan State University professor.

Genetics and environment work together to help people become accomplished musicians, finds the study of 850 sets of twins. It's another arrow in the quiver of the argument that both nature and nurture play a role in developing expertise.

"The nature vs. nurture debate has raged since the beginning of psychology," said Zach Hambrick, MSU professor of psychology. "This makes it very clear that it's both. Not only in the sense that both nature and nurture contribute, but that they interact with each other."

The study found:

- Accomplished musicians practiced much more than those who weren't accomplished.
- That propensity to practice was fueled partly by genetics, which the researchers were able to establish by comparing identical twins, who share 100 percent of their genes, with fraternal twins, who share 50 percent of their genes. The finding suggests genetics influence the sorts of activities we pursue.
- When it came to music accomplishment, genes had a bigger influence on those who practiced than those who didn't.

**Read the full, original story: [Genetics and environment work together to help people become accomplished musicians, study finds](#)**